

HAIL *and*
FAREWELL!

GEORGE MOORE

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HAIL AND FAREWELL!

By GEORGE MOORE

EVELYN INNES

THE LAKE

MEMOIRS OF MY DEAD LIFE

HAIL AND FAREWELL

Ave—Salve—Vale

HAIL AND FAREWELL!

BY
GEORGE MOORE


VOLUME II



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SALVE



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XII

IN Mayo, almost in my own parish, was fought the most famous battle in Irish legend; from Mayo came Davitt, the Land League, and now a discovery which will re-create Ireland. The shepherds will fight hard, but the sword I found in my garden will prevail against the crozier, and by degrees the parish priest will pass away, like his ancestor the Druid.

I remembered the absurd review the *Times* published about the *Descent of Man*, and Matthew Arnold's fine phrase about the difficulty of persuading men to rise out of the unclean straw of their intellectual habits—his very words, no doubt—and his wisest, for the human mind declines if not turned out occasionally; mental, like bodily, cleanliness is a habit; and when Papists have been persuaded to bring up their children Protestants the next generation may cross over to the Agnostic end of the quadrille. My co-religionists will not like to hear me say it, but I will say it all the same: Protestantism is but a stage in the human journey; and man will continue to follow his natural evolution despite the endless solemnity of Wolfgang Goethe, who captured the admiration of all the pundits when he said that it would have been better if Luther had never been born, meaning thereby that Luther saved perishing Christianity. Arnold, who is nearly as pompous as Goethe and more vindictive, saw that man likes to bide like a pig in a sty. But enough of Arnold; I must not lead my readers into thinking that a single striking phrase is sufficient condonation for his very Rugby prose, epitomised in that absurd line about

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seeing life steadily and seeing it whole, a line that led one generation gaping into the wilderness, John Eglinton heading it. . . . To John I shall have to go presently, but I shall have to tell Æ the great news first. To-day is Wednesday, Thursday, Friday—on Saturday night!

And on Saturday night I was out on my doorstep, looking down the street to see if Æ were coming, trying to discover his appearance in that of every distant passer-by. He did not come, and dinner dragged itself slowly through its three courses, and vowing that I didn't care a brass farthing whether he came or stayed, I rose up from the table and pitched myself into an armchair. All the same I was glad to hear his knock about nine. He came in sweeping a great mass of hair from his forehead and telling me that he had had to go to Foxrock to meet some man from Germany who had written a book about economics, and, having discussed rural banks all the afternoon, he was ready to talk to me about impressionist painting till midnight, and to read me an article which would have interested me if I had not been already absorbed by my idea.

Æ, I've made a discovery that will revolutionise Ireland.

It seemed to me that he should start up from his chair and wave his hands; but he continued smoking his old pipe, looking at me from time to time, till, at last, there was nothing else for me to do but to throw myself upon his mercy, asking him if it weren't very wonderful that nobody had noticed the fact that Dogma and literature are incompatible. He seemed to think that everybody knew that this was so; and is there anything more discouraging than to find one's daring definitions accepted as commonplace truths?

Then, my dear Æ, you've been extraordinarily remiss.

You should have gone down and preached in Bray, taking for your text, Dogma corrodes the intelligence. You weren't stoned when you preached that——

The Catholics will not admit their intellectual inferiority. But if the history of the world proves it?

All the same——

When I say no Catholic literature, of course I mean that ninety and five per cent. of the world's literature was written by Protestants and Agnostics.

Even so, Æ answered, Catholics will continue to bring up their children in a faith that hasn't produced a book worth reading since the Reformation.

Well, what's to be done?

Æ was dry, very dry. The German economist seemed to have taken all the sting out of him, and I began to see that in this new adventure he would be of little use to me. Rolleston has read every literature, but he had retired to Wicklow, his family having outgrown the house on Pembroke Road, and it was reported that he now was more interested in sheep than in books. Besides, he is a Protestant, and it would be more enlightening to hear a Catholic on the subject of my great discovery. A Catholic would have to put up some sort of defence, unless, indeed, he entrenched himself in theology, saying that it was no part of the business of Catholicism to consider whether dogma tended to encourage or repress literary activities. To this defence, the true one, I should have no answer.

Gill is my man, I said, as I got out of bed on Monday morning. He was educated at Trinity, and has lived in France. It will no doubt be disagreeable to him to listen to my proofs one after the other, but my business to-day is not to take Gill out for a pleasant walk, but to find out what defence an educated Catholic can put up.

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Hullo, my dear Moore! Gill said, raising his eyes from his writing-table.

I've come to take you for a walk, Gill.

I'll be ready in a few minutes.

And I watched my friend, who closed one eye curiously as he signed his letters, his secretary standing over him, handing them to him, one after the other, and answering questions until one of his lecturers came in, a man called Fletcher. The lecturer and Gill talked away, each answering the other as echoes do down a mountain-side, until at last I had to beg Fletcher to desist, and giving Gill his hat, I persuaded him out of the office down the stairs. Even when we were in the street he was undecided whether we should go along the square, wandering down Grafton Street, or whether we should treat ourselves to the Pembroke Road. The hawthorns are in flower and thrushes are singing there. Gill agreed and we tripped along together, Gill yawning in the midst of his enjoyment, as is his wont—delightful little yawns. We yawn like dogs, a sudden gape and all is over; but Gill yawns like a cat, and a cat yawns as he eats, with *gourmandise*. We can read a cat's yawn in his eyes long before it appears in his jaws. Tom settles himself and waits for the yawn, enjoying it in anticipation. His sensuality is expressed in his yawn; his moustaches go up just like a cat's. His yawn is one of the sights of our town, and is on exhibition constantly at the Abbey Theatre. We do not go to the Abbey Theatre to watch it, but we watch it when we are at the Abbey, and we enjoy it oftener during a bad play than we do during a good one—*The Play Boy* distracts our attention from it, but when *Deirdre* is performed his yawns while our tedium away. His yawn is what is most real, most essential in him; it is himself; it inspires him; and out of his yawn wisdom comes. (Does this

theory regarding the source of his wisdom conflict with an earlier theory?) He yawns in the middle of his own speeches, oftener, so I am assured, than any one of his auditors. He has been seen yawning in chapel, and it is said that he yawns even in those intimate moments of existence when—— but I will not labour the point; we can have no exact knowledge on this subject whether or no Gill yawns when he—— we will dismiss all the stories that have collected about these yawns as apocryphal, restricting our account to those yawns that happen—well, in our faces.

Gill and I leaned over Baggot Street Bridge, watching the canal-boat rising up in the lock, the opening of the gates to allow the boat to go through, and the hitching on of the rope to the cross-bar. The browsing horse, roused by a cry, struck his toes into the towing-path, and the strain began again all the way to the next lock, the boy flourishing a leafy bough, just pulled from the hedge. We continued our interrupted walk, glad that we had not been born canal-horses, Gill's step as airy as his thoughts, and, as we walked under flowering boughs, he began to talk to me about my volume of peasant stories. I was glad he did, for I had just found another translator, an Irish speaker, a Kerry man, and reckoned on this piece of news to interest him. But as soon as I mentioned that my friend was a Protestant and was going to take Orders, Gill spoke of Soupers, and on my asking him his reason for doing so, he said a man with so Irish a name, and coming from so Catholic a part of the country, could not have come from any but Catholic stock.

It has always seemed to me that if a man may modify his political attitude as Gill had done, the right to modify his spiritual can hardly be denied. But among Catholics the vert is regarded with detestation. With them religion

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is looked upon as a family inheritance, even more than politics. A damned irreligious lot, I thought, but did not speak my thought, for I wished the subject, dogma or literature, to arise naturally out of the conversation; I did not attempt to guide it, but just dropped a remark that even if the man in question came of Catholic stock and had separated himself from Roman formulas for worldly reasons, it did not seem to me that we should blame him, life being what it is, a tangle of motives. But it is difficult to stint oneself, and I was soon asking Gill for what reason would he have a man change his religion if pecuniary and sexual motives were excluded? No man verts for theological, except Newman, I said. Do you know another? And during our walk all the reasons used for verting were discussed. A new reason has just occurred to me, Gill—literature.

Rome was always the patron of the arts.

Pagan Rome, yes. Alexander VI. saved the world from a revival of the Middle Ages by burning that disagreeable monk, Savonarola; and Julius II. saved the Renaissance; but since the Council of Trent Catholics have almost ceased to write.

Gill laughed a little recklessly and contented himself with saying, Yes, it is very extraordinary . . . if it be a fact.

But, Gill, why not consider this question in our walk?

I would sooner that the defence of Catholicism were taken by one more capable than myself.

Whom would you care to see undertake the task if not yourself? He spoke of Father Tom Finlay. But it was Father Tom that set me thinking on this very subject, for when I said that Irish Catholics had written very little, he concurred, saying that Maynooth, with all its education, had not produced even a theological work—his very words.

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Did he say that? Gill asked, with the interest that all Catholics take in every word that comes from their priests.

But I would sooner hear what you, a layman, have to say.

Flattered by the invitation, Gill's somewhat meagre mind began to put forth long weedy sentences, and from these I gathered that I was possibly right in saying that the Church had defined her doctrines at the Council of Trent, and therefore it might be said that the Catholic mind was less free in the twentieth century than in the Middle Ages.

All the same, the great period of French literature came after the Reformation.

You know French literature as well as I do, Gill, and we'll just run through it. French literature in the sixteenth century is represented by Descartes, Rabelais, and Montaigne, all three Agnostics. In the seventeenth century French literature in the Court of Louis Quatorze, which you look upon as the Golden Age, began with Corneille and Racine, but the tragedies of Corneille and Racine do not attempt any criticism of life and the conduct of life, for their heroes and heroines were not Christians, and their ideas could not come under the ban of the Church.

Fénelon?

A gentle light suited to weak eyes, but remember always that my contention is not that no Catholic ever wrote a book, but that ninety-five per cent. of the world's literature is written by Agnostics and Protestants.

Bossuet?

A very elaborate and erudite rhetorician, whom Louis XIV. employed to unite all the Protestant sects in one Gallican Church. He set himself to this task, but before it was finished Louis XIV. had settled his differences with the Pope.

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The beauty of Pascal's writing you will not deny, and his Catholicism——

Is more than doubtful, Gill. The Port Royal School has always been suspected of Protestantism, and you will not deny that Pascal's repudiation of the Sacraments justified the suspicion. *Naturellement même cela vous fera croire et vous abêtira.* A difficult phrase to translate, Gill; the best that I can do at this moment is, Sacraments help you to believe, but they stupefy you. But you know French as well as I do.

Gill protested against my interpretation.

Then why was the phrase suppressed in the Port Royal edition by the Jesuits? Cousin restored it after referring to the original manuscript. Now, in the eighteenth century we have Voltaire, the deist, the arch-mocker, the real *briseur de fers*; Rousseau, a Protestant, whose writings it is said brought about the French Revolution; Diderot and Montesquieu. The nineteenth century in France was all Agnostic.

Chateaubriand!

You can have him and welcome, for through him we shall escape the danger of proving too much, but——

But what?

I was thinking of his name, which is very like him. Upon my word, Gill, our names are our souls. A most suitable name for the author of *Le Génie du Christianisme*, a name to be incised on the sepulchre at St. Malo among the rocks out at sea, but he ordered that none should be put upon the slab; a name for an ambassador, a diplomatist, a religious reformer, but not one for a poet, an artist; a pompous ridiculous name, a soft, unreal name, a grandiose name, a windy name, a spongy name, spongy as a *brioche*—Chateaubrioche. And looking into Gill's face I read a gentle distress. His books were a means

to an end instead of being an end in themselves. To criticise him in a phrase that he would have appreciated, I might say, *Je ne trouve dans ses œuvres que vapeur et tumulte.*

Whatever you may think of his writings, you cannot deny his Catholicism, and one of these days when I'm feeling less tired——

He wrote *Le Génie du Christianisme* in his mistress's house, reading her a chapter every night before they went to bed. It is true that Catholics must have mistresses, as well as Protestants, but you are an Irish Catholic, and would be loath to admit as much. Chateaubriand was content to regret *Atala*, but Edward burnt his early poems. Verlaine was a Catholic and he was a great poet, there is no question about that, Gill. You see I am dealing fairly with you, but like Chateaubriand, Verlaine's Catholicism *ne l'a nullement gêné dans sa vie.* He wrote lovely poems in the French language, some were pious, some were indecent, and he spaced them out in *Parallèlement.* He did not look upon Catholicism as a means of government, he just liked the Liturgy; Mary and the saints were pleasing to him in stained glass, and when he came out of prison he was repentant and wrote *Sagesse.* Paul Verlaine! Since the Elizabethan days, was a poet ever dowered with a more beautiful name? And his verses correspond to his name. *Où donc est l'âme de Verlaine?* A refrain for a ballad! What shall we say? Out of hatred of the Voltairean grocer my old friend Huysmanns plunged into magic. The more ridiculous the miracle the more he believed in it; and the French ecclesiastics would be sorry to have about them many Catholics like him. Upon my word, Gill, my theory that Catholicism hasn't produced a readable book since the Reformation stands on more legs than four.

Some carts were passing at the time, and when the rattle of their wheels died down, I asked Gill what he thought of my discovery, but, detecting or seeming to detect a certain petulance in his voice, I interrupted:

But, Gill, I don't see why the discussion should annoy you. It isn't as if I were asking you to reconsider your position regarding the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, of Transubstantiation and the Pope's Infallibility. So far as I know there is no dogma declaring that Catholics are not intellectually inferior to Protestants and Agnostics. Your religion leaves you quite free to accept my theory; indeed, I think it encourages you to do so, for does not Catholicism always prefer the obedient and the poor in spirit to the courageous, the learned, and the wise? And I spoke of the *Imitation of Christ* till Gill became so petulant that I thought it would be well to desist, and began to speak instead of one of his favourite subjects—compromise. At once he held forth, disclaiming the idealogues of the French Revolution, who would remake the world according to their idea, without regard to the facts of human nature, and then, as if pre-occupied by his intellectual relationship with Machiavelli, Gill entered upon a discussion regarding the duties of a statesman, saying that all great reforms had been effected by compromise, and it was by her genius for compromise that England had built up the Empire; and he continued in this strain until at last it was impossible for me to resist the temptation to ask him to explain to me the difference between trimming and compromise, which he did very well, inflicting defeat upon me. The trimmer, he said, compromises for his own advantage, irrespective of the welfare of the State, but the statesman who compromises is influenced by his sympathy for the needs of humanity, which should not be changed too quickly.

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And this, the lag end of our argument, carried us pleasantly back over Baggot Street Bridge, but at the corner of Herbert Street, the street in which Gill lives, I could not resist a Parthian shot.

But, Gill, if compromise be so essential in human affairs, is it not a pity that the Irish haven't followed the example of the English? Especially in religion, I said.

As Gill did not answer me at once I followed him to the door of his house.

It can't be denied that Protestantism is a compromise? This Gill had to admit. But it is not one, I said, that you are likely to accept. He laughed and I returned to Ely Place, pleased by the rickety lodging-house appearance of Baggot Street against the evening sky, and, for the moment forgetful of the incompatibility of dogma and literature, my thoughts melted into a meditation, the subject of which was that the sun sets nowhere so beautifully as it does at the end of Baggot Street.

As the clocks had not yet struck seven, I turned into Stephen's Green and followed the sleek borders of the brimming lake, admiring the willow-trees in their first greenness and their reflections in the tranquil water. The old eighteenth-century brick, the slender balconies and the wide flights of steps seemed conscious that they had fallen into evil days; and horrified at the sight of a shop that had been run up at the corner of the Green, I cried, Other shops will follow it, and this beautiful city of Dublin will become in very few years as garish as London. To keep Dublin it might be well to allow it to slumber in its Catholicism.

And at these words my talk with Gill, which had already become a memory, rose up before me. He isn't a stupid man, I said, but why does his intelligence differ from mine and from the intelligence of every Protestant and

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Agnostic? We are different. Catholics lack initiative, I suppose that that is it. The Catholic mind loses its edge quickly. Sex sharpens it for a little while, but when the Catholic marries and settles down he very soon becomes like an old carving-knife that carves nothing. The two whetstones are sex and religious discussion, and we must keep passing our intelligences up one and down the other.

The ducks climbed out of the water. And the gulls? There was not one in the air nor on the water; and, after wondering a while if they had returned to the sea, I decided for good and all that I owed the preservation of my own intelligence to my theological interests. Some readers may prefer, or think they prefer, my earlier books, but none will deny that my intelligence has sharpened, whereas Gill's—— My cook will grumble if I keep dinner waiting, and I returned to Ely Place to eat, and to meditate on the effect of dogma on literature.

XIII

The great French writers of the nineteenth century were Victor Hugo, Lamartine, Balzac, Gautier, Michelet, Renan, Taine, Sainte-Beuve, Gérard de Nerval, Mérimée, les Goncourts, George Sand, Flaubert, Zola, Maupassant, and all these were Agnostics; Guizot was a Protestant, his historical works have I suppose some value; John Eglinton will tell me about him, and glad of an excuse for a visit to the National Library, I went forth after dinner to talk literature again, arriving in Kildare Street about half-past nine, when John Eglinton was writing the last of those mysterious slips of paper, cataloguing, I think he calls it. A visitor is welcome after half-past nine, and in the sizzle of electric light we debate till ten. Then he

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comes back to smoke a cigar with me or I go home with him. He lacks the long, clear vision of Æ, but when an idea is brought close to him he appreciates it shrewdly, and it is the surety that he will understand, a little later, my idea better than I understand it myself, that makes his first embarrassment so attractive to me.

In the evening I am about to relate I found him a little more short-sighted than usual; his little face wrinkled up as he sought to grasp, to understand my discovery that Catholics had not produced a book worth reading since the Reformation, for John Eglinton only understands his own thoughts, and it is with difficulty that he is rolled out of them.

You mean that all English literature has been produced in the Protestant tradition, but I'm afraid that Protestants will think this is a somewhat too obvious truth. Of course, we all know that Chaucer is the only English Catholic poet——

My dear John Eglinton, you've not understood! A worried look came into his face, and in his desire to understand he seemed like getting cross with me. My belief is that Catholic countries haven't produced a book.

John gasped.

But France?

We went into that question, and were talking of Pascal when the attendant came in to ask John for the keys; it was three minutes to ten.

Shall I ring the bell, sir?

John agreed that the bell might be rung, and we watched the odd mixture of men and women leave their books on the counter and go through the turnstiles. John had to wait till the last left, and the last was a little old gentleman about five feet high who has come

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to the library every night for the last thirty years to read Dickens and nothing but Dickens. He passed through the turnstile; we followed him; the fireman was consulted; and when all the lights were out John was free to go for a walk with me, and I think it was in Baggot Street that I succeeded in bringing home to him the importance of my discovery.

But Spain? he interjected. *Don Quixote*?

Spanish literature is contemporaneous with the Council of Trent when the Church defined her dogmas, and——

And *Don Quixote* is as unethical, he said, as *David Copperfield*.

Whatever merit Lope de Vega may have had in his day, he has none now; and we discussed for a while the interesting question whether the merits of books are permanent or temporary. Byron's poetry conquered Europe, and to-day everybody knows it to be doggerel; and in our understanding Calderon's plays are merely rows of little wooden figures moved hither and thither by a mind that seems gracious despite his conviction that the Inquisition was a kind and beneficent institution. All the same Shelley and Goethe admired Calderon; Shelley translated some pages, and John Eglinton agreed with me that these are the only pages of Shelley that we cannot read. He spoke of St. Patrick's Purgatory.

It passes beyond perception, and he laughed steadily.

Calderon, in spite of his piety, didn't succeed in avoiding heresy, for in ecclesiastic zeal he seems to have identified himself with Antinomianism. Perhaps he was condemned. You quite understand that my point isn't that a Catholic hasn't written a book since the Reformation, but that ninety and nine per cent., well, ninety and five per cent. of the literature of the world has been produced by Protestants and Agnostics.

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I see what you mean now, and the dear little man of the puckered face listened on his doorstep to an exhortation to write a little more of that beautiful English which he so wastefully spends in his conversation. He listened, but unwillingly; he does not like my literary exhortations, and I pondered on his future as I walked home. He will sink deeper and deeper into his armchair, and into his own thoughts.

The closing of the public-houses told me that it must be near eleven, and the thought of dear Edward sitting behind his screen, smoking, led me to Leinster Street. The Sword Motive brought the candle-light glimmering down the stairs; the door opened, and two old cronies went upstairs to talk once more of painting and literature—two old cronies who had known each other in boyhood, who had talked all through our lives on the same subjects, Edward feeling things perhaps a little deeper than I have ever done. When the *Master Builder* has been played he walks from the theatre into the Green, and sits under the hawthorns in some secluded spot, his eyes filled with tears at the memory, as he would say it himself, of so much beauty. Was it Yeats described him as the sketch of a great man—the sketch, he said; *l'ébauche* better realises his idea of dear Edward; but Yeats does not know French; and while my eyes followed Edward about the room I wondered if it would be wise for me to exchange, were it possible, a wine-glass of intelligence for a rummer of temperament. We have gone through life together, myself charging windmills, Edward holding up his hands in amazement.

More culture and less common sense than the Spanish original, I said, and I watched him moving ponderously about his ungainly room, so like himself. There is something eternal about Edward, an entity come down through

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the ages, and myself another entity. Reciprocating entities, I said, glancing at some pictures of famous churches. (Edward pins photographic reproductions on the dusty wall-paper.) A beautiful church caught my eye, and, desiring Edward's criticism of it, as one desires an old familiar tune, I asked him if the church were an ancient or a modern one; and, answering that it was one of Pugin's churches, he lifted his glasses up on his nose and peered into the photograph, absorbed for some moments by the beauty which he perceived in it.

The church set us talking of Pugin's genius, and whether the world would ever invent a new form of architecture, or whether the age of architecture was over and done like the Stone and the Bronze Ages. Edward's churchwarden was now drawing famously, his glass of grog was by his side, and the nights in the Temple, when he used to tell me that he would like to write his plays in Irish, rose up before me. All his prejudices are the same, I said, more intense, perhaps; he is a little older, a little more liable to catch cold, and he spoke to me of the necessity of a screen to protect him from the draught coming under the door.

Have a cigar. He pushed the box towards me and continued to smoke his pipe.

Although not a priest, there is something hierarchic about him, and I thought of Ancient Egypt and then of our friendship. It was drawing to a close mysteriously as a long summer evening. We shall not see much of each other at the end of our lives, I said, wondering how the separation was going to come about, not liking to tell him of my great discovery, fearing to pain him.

You're very silent to-night, George, he jerked out, breaking the silence at last. Of what are you thinking?

Of a great discovery——

What, another! I thought you had come to the end of them. Your first was the naturalistic novel, your second impressionistic painting——

My third was your plays, Edward, and the Irish Renaissance, which is but a bubble.

Oh, it's only a bubble, is it? he said, his jolly great purple face shaking like a jelly.

You may laugh, I said, but it is no laughing matter for the Catholic Church if it can be shown that no Catholic has written a book since the Reformation. I wish you wouldn't laugh like that.

At the end of the next fit of laughter he bit a piece off the end of his churchwarden, and, getting up from the sofa, he searched for another along the chimney-piece, and, when he had filled it, he said to me, who had been sitting quite silent:

Now, tell me about this new mare's-nest.

I've told you already. There has been no Catholic literature since the Reformation, and very little before it. Boccaccio and Ariosto were pagans, Michael Angelo and Raphael——

But Michael Angelo painted *The Last Judgment* and Raphael *The Holy Family*.

We talked for an hour, and, his brain clearing suddenly, he said: Raphael and Michael Angelo lived in a Catholic country, came of Catholic inheritance, and painted Christian subjects.

You seem to me, Edward, to be satisfied with a very simple inquiry, I might say superficial inquiry, into a matter of great interest and intimately concerned with our movement; for why should we change the language of a country in which literature is forbidden? unless indeed some special indulgences are granted for prayers

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in Irish. Of course, if so the Irish Renaissance is but a bubble.

And what about your mission?

Good God! I hadn't thought of that, I said. And getting out of my chair, I walked up and down the room, overcome.

What are you thinking of? Edward asked at the end of a long silence.

Of what am I thinking? Of what you said just now.

What did I say?

You reminded me of my mission. Great God, Edward!

I wish you wouldn't take the Sacred Name in vain.

My life has been sacrificed for a bubble.

But you knew Ireland was a Catholic country.

I was bidden here. If some nun said she had seen a troop of angels and the Virgin Mary, you would believe it all, but when I tell you that on the road to Chelsea——

Seeing that I was profoundly moved, Edward ceased laughing, and began to speak of Newman.

Newman was a convert, I said, and he brought some of the original liberty of the Protestant into his Catholicism; isn't that so?

Edward puffed at his pipe and seemed to think that perhaps the convert was not quite so obedient as the born Catholic.

It's a very serious thing for me, I said, rising. I suppose I must be getting home.

He lit the candle and took me downstairs, and at the grating which guards the tobacconist's door I said:

I haven't examined the question thoroughly. I may discover some Catholic writers. Do you know of any?

Edward said he could not say offhand, and I crossed the tram-line, thinking how I had been ensnared, and wondering who was the snarer.

XIV

Some volumes of Lingard's *History of England* were brought down from my grandfather's library about fifty years ago, and Miss Westby had striven to teach me reading and history out of them. Now, Lingard was a Catholic, and Pascal, too, in spite of his many doubts. His thoughts (*Les Pensées*) were written in the hope that doubts might be reasoned away; it must have been in a moment of irritation that he scribbled that sacraments stupefy the recipient, for in the celebrated dialogue the believer escapes from the dilemma into which the unbeliever is pressing him by offering to make the matter between them the subject of a bet. The Kingdom of Earth is such a poor pleasure-ground that the believer decides to put his money on the Kingdom of Heaven; even if it should prove mythical my plight will not be worse than thine, he says; and if it should turn out a reality—how much better!

When I was half-way up Merrion Square I caught myself considering the word belief—the vainest word in the language, and the cause of all our misunderstandings, for nobody knows what he believes or disbelieves. We attach ourselves to certain ideas and detach ourselves from others; so runs the world away; and it was by the gateway in Ely Place that I remembered Saint-Simon and La Bruyère, two fine writers, and both of them Catholics. La Fontaine reached literary perfection in his *Fables*, but he could not have been interested in bird-life, else he would not have written of the reed bending beneath the weight of the wren. The image is charming, but wrens do not live among reeds. Was it the rhyme that lured him—*roseau* and *fardeau*? Rhyme never lured Shelley into mistakes

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about the habits of birds and flowers. But in the seventeenth century there was little love of Nature. However, it is with La Fontaine's Catholicism and not his ornithology that I am concerned. He wrote some improper stories. Fénelon, the author of *Télémaque* (fie upon it!), was a very poor writer, but he seems to have been an amiable gentleman, and we like to think of him, and hate to think of Bossuet, that detestable man, who persecuted Madame de Genlis and wrote a very artificial style. I cannot think of any other writers, but all the same, the seventeenth century shows up far better than I thought for. The eighteenth is, of course, Agnostic from end to end, unless we count Chateaubriand as an eighteenth-century writer, and we may, for he was born about 1760, and lived a long way into the nineteenth, dying at the end of the 'thirties . . . he may have lived right into the 'forties. Montalembert remained a staunch Catholic in spite of the Infallibility, declared about that time; and there were some Abbés who did not write badly, one Lamennais, whose writings got him into trouble with Rome.

English literature is, of course, Protestant—back, belly, and sides. Chaucer was pre-Reformation; Crashaw and Dryden returned to Catholicism; Pope seems to have called himself a Catholic, but his *Essay on Man* proves him to be an Agnostic. In the beginning of the nineteenth century there were a good many conversions, and some writers should be found among them. Newman! Arthur Symons mentioned him in the *Saturday Review* as having a style, so I suppose he must have one. I must read his *Apologia*, for Symons may have taken him on trust. Among the present-day writers are W. S. Lilly and Hilaire Belloc, professional Catholics, always ready to argue that the English decadence began with the sup-

pression of the monasteries. Hilarious regards the sixteenth century as altogether blameworthy, from an artistic point of view, I suppose, for in one of his polemics he declared himself to be no theologian, a strange admission from a professional Catholic, ranking him in my eyes with the veterinary surgeon who admits that he knows nothing about spavins. W. S. Lilly is more thoroughly interpenetrated with Catholic doctrines; his articles in the *Fortnightly* are harder, weightier, denser; he reads Aquinas every day, and dear Edward looks upon him as an admirable defender of the faith. Of late years the shepherds have taken up novel-writing, hoping, no doubt, to beguile their flocks away from the dangerous bowers of the lady-novelists, the beds of rose-leaves, the tiger-skins, and the other lustful displays and temptations. Amiable and educated gentlemen, every one of them, no doubt, but without any faintest literary gift. They would do better to return to their slums, where work suitable to their heads and hands awaits them.

I turned over in bed, and must have dozed a little while, for I suddenly found myself thinking of a tall sallow girl, with brown eyes and a receding chin, who used to show me her poems in manuscript ages ago. I thought them very beautiful at the time, and of this early appreciation I need not be ashamed, for the poems have lived a pleasant modest life ever since in a slight volume tediously illustrated, entitled *Preludes*. Unfortunately these poems preluded nothing but a great deal of Catholic journalism, a Catholic husband who once read me a chaplet of sixty sonnets which he had written to his wife, and a numerous Catholic progeny who had published their love of God in a volume entitled *Eyes of Youth*, which I might never have seen had not the title been mentioned one day by a friend who, fearing my sacrilegious mind, refused to

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lend me the book. But moved by a remembrance of Alice Meynell, I sent immediately for a copy.

And it came to me some hours later, brought by a messenger, a slim grey volume of poems, with an introduction by G. K. Chesterton, an able journalist, it is true, but that is hardly a reason for asking him to introduce a number of young Catholic writers to Protestant readers unless he has gone over to Rome. He could not have done that without reading the Fathers; and he could not have read them without their influencing his style. It rollicks down Fleet Street as pleasantly as ever, and we are there in the first lines, when he writes that all serious critics class Francis Thompson with Shelley and Keats. A critic may be learned, ignorant, discriminating, dense, subtle, venal, honest, and a hundred other things, but serious seems just the one adjective that Mr. Chesterton should have avoided. He must have been thinking with the surface of his brain when he compared Francis Thompson with Shelley; casual thinking always puts wrong words into our heads; a thoughtful critic would have classed Thompson with Crashaw; *un fond de Crashaw avec une garniture de Shelley* is a definition of Francis Thompson which I put forward, hoping that it may please somebody. Francis Thompson accepted Catholic dogma; it provided him with themes, whereupon he might exercise his art; he wrote for the sake of words, they were his all, and avoided piety, for piety is incompatible with a great wealth of poetic diction. He left piety to his poetic inferiors, to the sisters Meynell, Olivia and Viola, who seem to be drawn to verse-writing because it allows them to speak of Mary's knee, the blood-stained Cross, the Fold, the Shepherd, and the Lamb. They must have deplored Monica Saleeby's *Retrospect*, for it does not contain a single pious allusion, and welcomed her *Rebuke*, for

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in this poem Monica makes amends for her abstinence, and uses up all her sisters' pious phrases, and adds to them. (I am assuming that Monica Saleeby was originally a Meynell, for her verse is so distinctly Meynell that one hardly believes it to be an imitation.) The volume concludes with the poems of Francis Meynell; but, though the name of God occurs six times in a poem of four stanzas, I think he lacks the piety of his sisters; he does not produce the word with the admirable unction and sanctimonious grace of Maurice Healy, Ruth Lindsay, and Judith Lytton. Were Judith and Ruth like Monica originally Meynells, or are they merely of the school of Meynell? I have pondered their poems now for nearly an hour without being able to satisfy myself on this point. Francis is a Meynell with a drop of Coventry Patmore, but the drop must have gone crossways in him, as we say in Ireland, for even when writing about the marriage-bed he cannot refrain from pietistic allusion:

For when she dreams, who is beloved,
The ancient miracle stands proved,—
Virginity's much motherhood!
For O the unborn babes she keeps.
The unthought glory, lips unwooded.

But I must be thinking of my readers, for not a doubt of it every one of them is saying: We will assume that the ladies go to confession once a week, and the gentlemen once a month. Get on with your story. Tell us, is there any Catholic literature in Scandinavia?

My dear readers, Scandinavia seems to be entirely free from Catholic literature; and, looking from Ibsen and Björnson towards Russia, I am afraid that Turgenev, the most thoughtful of all tale-tellers, must be reckoned as an

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Agnostic writer, and Tolstoy, for his lack of belief in the Resurrection, would have been denied Christian burial by St. Paul. Lermontov was certainly an Agnostic. My dear readers, it seems impossible to discover a Catholic writer of importance in Europe.

A voice cries in my ear, Have you looked into German literature? and I answer back, I know nothing of German literature, but will call upon John Eglinton to-night. But John will only tell me that Goethe and Schiller were Protestants, and that Heine was a Jew. He may mention that the Schlegels turned Catholic in their old age. Perhaps Best will be able to tell me. Best is John's coadjutor in the National Library: a young man with beautiful shining hair and features so fine and delicate that many a young girl must have dreamed of him at her casement window, and would have loved him if he had not been so passionately interested in the in-fixed pronoun—one of the great difficulties of ancient Irish. So I went to Best at the end of the evening (John Eglinton being on duty in the mornings).

Kuno Meyer, he said, will be here at the end of the month, and he'll be able to tell you all that you want to know about German literature.

You are quite right, Best. Meyer is my man; he'll understand at once. Best is Kuno Meyer's favourite lamb, and Kuno Meyer is a great German scholar who comes over to Dublin from Liverpool occasionally to shepherd the little flock that browses about his Celtic erudition; and a pressing invitation was sent to him next day, asking him to spend a week or a fortnight with me. An invitation of a fortnight did not strike me as excessive. We had been friends for over a year, ever since the day he had come to a rehearsal of *The Tinker and the Fairy*, a delightful one-act play that Hyde had written for the

entertainment of a Gaelic assembly in my garden. He was prompting Hyde, who was not sure of his words, when I came into the room, and my surprise was great, for it is not usual to meet the Irish language in a light brown overcoat and a large, soft, brown hat; beards are uncommon among Gaelic speakers, and long, flowing moustaches unknown. A Gaelic Leaguer's eyes are not clear and quiet, and he does not speak with a smooth even voice; his mind is not a comfortable mind; and by these contraries, in defiance of Aristotle, I am describing Kuno Meyer, the great scholar artist, the pleasure of whose life it has been to disinter the literature of the ancient Celt, and to translate it so faithfully that when we read we seem to see those early times as in a mirror.

It would be a pleasure to me to write some pages on this subject, and I would write them now if the man did not stand before me as he was when I first saw him, a wreck with rheumatism, looking at me sideways, unable to move his neck, his hands and feet swollen. He must have suffered a good deal of pain, but it never showed itself in his face, and though he was well aware that his disease was progressive ossification, he did not complain of his hardship in being so strangely afflicted. At that time death did not seem to be very far away, but he did not fear death, and I admired his unruffled mind, often reminding me of a calm evening, and thought myself the most fortunate of men when he promised to stay at my house next time he came to Dublin. His intelligence and his learning were a great temptation, and during the long evenings we spent together my constant effort was to get him to talk about himself. But he did not seem very much interested in the subject; he does not see himself as a separate entity; and the facts that dribbled out were that he had come to England when he was

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seventeen, the first visit not being a long one. He returned, however, two years later, and thought that it had taken him about five years to learn English and to capture the spirit of the language. I seemed to get a better sight of him when he mentioned that he had been private tutor for two years. A studious German, I said to myself, who, when not engaged with his pupils, was preparing himself for a University career. He must have told me how he became a Professor of Romantic Languages at Queen's College, Liverpool, but he could not have made much of the story, else I should have remembered it. I learnt from Best that he was once an excellent cricketer, and though now crippled with rheumatism it was easy to see that he must have looked well on the cricket-field in white flannels and a blue belt, and he must have been a strong man, but never a fast runner, I am sure of that, therefore I place him at point . . . and can see him in my imagination, the sleeves of his shirt turned up, revealing a sinewy brown arm.

But the cause of his illness, his affection? The cause may have been the Liverpool climate, or his disease may have been constitutional. Who shall trace the disease back to its source? Not the specialists, certainly; for years they were consulted. What do you eat? said the first. I often eat beef, was Meyer's answer. Beef is poison to you; mutton as much as you like. Meyer did not touch beef again for three months, but the disease continued. He consulted another specialist. What do you eat? Mutton? Mutton is poison to you; beef as much as you like. To be on the safe side Meyer ate neither one nor the other, but, notwithstanding his obedience to the different diets imposed upon him, his disease continued unabated. Another specialist was consulted. What do you drink? Claret? Claret is poison to you;

whisky as much as you like. With whisky for his daily drink his disease developed alarmingly; Meyer went abroad; he consulted French and German specialists; some gave him pills, some recommended champagne and Rhine wines; but his disease gained steadily, and at last the doctors contented themselves by advising him to avoid everything that he found disagreed with him, which was the best advice they could have given, for a man is often his own best doctor. Meyer's instincts prompted him to spend some months in a warm climate, and it was while travelling in Portugal that Meyer drank some champagne, feeling very depressed, and during a night of agony it occurred to him that perhaps alcohol was the bane. He determined to give abstinence from alcohol a trial, avoiding it in its every form, even light claret. The disease seemed to stop; and, speaking of his affliction to a fellow-traveller in the train from Lisbon to Oporto, he heard of some baths in Hungary.

You have tried so many remedies that I don't dare to ask you to go there, but if you should ever find yourself in Hungary, you might try them.

Meyer went to Hungary, hopeless; but he returned convinced that if he had gone there some years earlier the treatment would have boiled all the stiffness out of his neck and shoulders; he had gone, however, soon enough to rid himself of the greater part of his affection, and to secure himself against any further advances.

He will die like another, but not of ossification, I muttered, as I paced the greensward, looking at every turn through the hawthorn boughs. Why, there he is! and, banging the wicket, I ran across the street to let him in with my latchkey.

Let me help you off with your overcoat, I said, as soon as we were in the passage. You got my letter? It was

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kind of you to come over so soon, and my eyes dropped to the papers in his hand.

I've long wanted to come to Dublin.

And for why? I asked sympathetically.

You have always taken a kindly and very appreciative interest in the ancient Irish poems which I have been fortunate enough to discover.

And to translate so exquisitely that you and Lang are our only translators, I said, my eyes going back to the papers in his hand. When did you arrive?

He admitted that he had been a couple of days in Dublin without finding time to come to see me, and I thought of Best, who is always frisking about Meyer, gathering up every scrap of his time, sometimes unjustifiably, as I thought in the present case, for Best knew how necessary Meyer's learning was to me.

And where are you staying? I asked.

As far back as three months ago I promised Best to stay with him, but my visit to Percy Place is now over, and when you are tired of me I'm going to take a lodging at Kingstown, so we shall see a good deal of each other.

You are on the track of something important, I said. Do tell me about it. Have you discovered another Marban—another Liadain and Curithir?

Meyer smiled at my enthusiasm through his long moustache, and told me that he had spent the morning in Trinity College library and had come upon—

Another Nature Poem?

No, but a very curious religious poem. My face clouded. I think it will interest you. It throws a light on the life of those times, for the author, a monk, tells us that he left his monastery, which had become noisy, as he required perfect quiet for the composition of his poem, *God's Grandfather*.

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Whose grandfather?

God's Grandfather; that is the title of the poem.

I never knew God had a grandfather.

Mary had a mother; the Biblical narrative is silent regarding her parentage, but the early Greek writers were known to our author, and he read in Epiphanius that Mary's mother, Anne, had had three husbands—Joachim, Cleophas, and Salomas, and that she had been brought to bed of a daughter by each husband. Each daughter was called Mary, but only one Conception was Immaculate. By an Immaculate Conception he understood a conception outside of common sensuality, brought about by some spiritual longing into which obedience to the will of God entered largely.

How very curious! I wonder if the Meynells would have included the poem in their collection?

Meyer became interested at once, but his interest slackened when he heard that their poems were modern, and a kindly smile began in his gold-brown moustache, and he said:

A long family separating in the afternoon for the composition of pious poems.

Like your hermits, I said; but the Catholicism of the desert is more interesting than the Catholicism of the suburbs. Let's get back to the thirteenth century.

His monastery was too noisy for the composition of *God's Grandfather*, and he retired into the wilderness to think out the circumstances of Mary's Immaculate Conception. And this is how he imagined it: Joachim, as he was driving his cattle home one evening, met some travellers who wished to purchase a bullock from him. He begged of them to choose an animal; they did so, asking Joachim to name a price. But instead of putting the money agreed upon into his hand the travellers poured

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several blessings on Joachim and told him to return home as quickly as he could. He was at first loath to go without his money, but the travellers told him he must accept the blessings they had poured over him in lieu of money, and on his asking innocently what he was to do with the blessings, he was told that the use of the blessings would be revealed to him when he reached home. And being a man of faith, he ran with the blessings he had received clasped to his bosom, not stopping till he saw Anne, his wife, who happened to be gathering some brushwood to light the fire for their evening meal, and sure enough, as the travellers had told him, unexpected words were put into his mouth: Anne, put down the sticks thou art gathering, and follow me into the inner room. She did his bidding, as a wife should do, and, as they lay face to face, Joachim showered upon her the blessings that the travellers had given him, and it was these blessings that caused the conception recognised as miraculous by Joachim, and afterwards by the Church.

And you have translated that poem? I asked. He answered that he had made a rough translation of some stanzas, and while he read them to me I marvelled at the realism of early Christianity, and when he had finished reading, I cried: How different from our sloppy modern piety! In the poem you have just read to me, there isn't a single abstract term. Meyer, you are making wonderful literary discoveries, unearthing a buried civilisation. And on these words the conversation dropped. The moment had come for me to tell Meyer that I, too, was making discoveries. His cigar was only half-way through, and it was plain that the suave and lucid mind of Meyer was at my disposal. My argument had been repeated so often that it had become a little trite, and a suspicion intruded

upon my mind as I hurried from St. Augustine, through Dante, Boccaccio, and Ariosto, that my narrative had grown weary. Or was it that Meyer, being a professor, could not grasp at once that we must choose between literature and dogma? A perplexed look came into his face as I sketched in broad lines the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature in France, and as I was about to proceed northward through Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, he asked questions which revealed the professor latent in him; and whilst I sought to persuade him out of his professorial humours, it began to dawn upon me that he would show to better advantage in a debate on the Shakespearean drama, or on the debt that the dramatists of the Restoration owed to Molière. A better subject still for discussion, I continued on a rising temper, would be *Mademoiselle de Scudéry*, whose festoons and astragals are of course plainly to be descried in the works of Pope and Prior. But I still hoped that Meyer's intelligence would awaken, and so I restrained snarl and sneer, exhibiting myself for at least five minutes as a miracle of patience.

You find that Catholicism draws men's thoughts away from this world, and that Catholic literature lacks healthy realism; but surely literature has nothing to do with theology?

Of course it hasn't, Meyer. But I haven't succeeded in explaining myself, and I must begin it all over again. St. Augustine—but perhaps it is not necessary to go over it all again. In the Middle Ages there was no literature, only some legends, and a good deal of theology. Why was this? Because if you plant an acorn in a vase the oak must burst the vase or become dwarfed. I can't put it plainer. Do you understand?

You spoke just now of the intense realism of the Irish poets.

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The poem you read me was pre-Reformation.

It seems to me that if one outlet be closed to man's thought he will find another, and perhaps in a more concentrated and violent form. Even in Spain, he said, where thought was stifled by such potent organisations as Church and State, we find man expressing himself daringly. Velasquez.

You mean the Venus in the National Gallery—that stupid thing for which the nation paid forty-five thousand pounds; the thighs and the back are very likely by Velasquez, but not the head nor the curtain nor the Cupid. But, Meyer, bums have never been actually condemned by the Church, and for the moment I am not interested in the fact that realistic painting thrived in Spain when the Inquisition was most powerful.

Goethe speaks of free spirits, and from that moment Meyer began to rouse himself.

Of course the spirit must be free. And Germany, being divided equally between Catholics and Protestants——

A troubled look came into Meyer's face. I fail to see how your theory can be settled one way or the other by German literature, but if you want me to tell you the names of the great German writers, he answered in his most professorial manner, those that occur to me at the moment are Lessing, Goethe, Schiller, Heine, the Schlegels, Kant, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Wagner, Jean Paul Richter, Herder, Lenau, and Nietzsche.

And all these were North German writers? None came from the South. Are there no Catholics among them, not one?

No, he said, none. One of the Schlegels turned Catholic in his old age.

And did he write after he turned Catholic?

No; as well as I remember he wrote nothing afterwards.

Austria is a great country. Has it produced no Catholic writers?

None of any note, Meyer answered. There was—— and he mentioned the names of two writers, and as they were unknown to me I asked him to tell me about them. Writers of fairy-tales, he said, of feeble novels—writers of the fifth and sixth and seventh rank. No one outside Austria knows their names.

Then, I said, I'm done for. Meyer raised his eyes.

Done for?

I was led into this country in the hopes of reviving the language. It seemed to me that a new language was required to enwomb a new literature. I am done for. Ireland will not forego her superstitions for the sake of literature—accursed superstitions that have lowered her in intelligence and made her a slut among nations. All the same it is strange that you fail to see that dogma and literature are incompatible. I suppose the idea is new to you.

We talked for a little while longer, and then Meyer asked me if he might go to the writing-table and continue the translation of his poem. And while listening to his pen moving over the paper it seemed to me that a chance still remained, a small one, for the evidence that Germany offered could hardly be refuted. Justice demanded that a Catholic should be heard, and the Colonel would be able to put up as good a defence as another; and a letter to him began in my head, half a dozen lines, reminding him that he had been away a long time in the country, and asking him to come up to Dublin and spend a few days with me.

When I rushed up to tell him of my discovery he was in breeches and riding-boots, presenting in my drawing-room an incongruous spectacle of sport on a background of impressionist pictures.

You don't mean to tell me that you brought me all the way from Mayo to argue with you about Catholicism and Protestantism, leaving important work?

What work?

Clearing the Stone Park.

A darker cloud than that I had anticipated appeared in his long, narrow face, and as he seemed very angry I thought it better to listen to his plan for allowing the villagers to cut wood in the Stone Park. But the temptations to hear him argue that literature and dogma were compatible compelled me to break in.

Do let me tell you; it won't take more than ten minutes for me to state my case. And this is a matter that interests me much more than the Stone Park. The question must be threshed out.

He protested much, beseeching me to believe that he had neither the learning nor the ability to argue with me.

Father Finlay——

That's what Gill said. But the matter is one that can be decided by anybody of ordinary education; even education isn't necessary, for it must be clear to anybody who will face the question without prejudice that the mind petrifies if a circle be drawn round it, and it can hardly be denied that dogma draws a circle round the mind.

The Colonel was very wroth, and his words were that I lived among Protestants, who were inclined to use me as a stalking-horse.

I came to Ireland, as you know, to help literature, and

if I see that dogma and literature are incompatible, I must say so.

At that moment the parlourmaid opened the door and announced dinner.

You'll be late for dinner, Maurice.

If I am, you're to blame, and he rushed upstairs; and as we sat down to dinner he begged me, in French, to drop the subject, Teresa being a Catholic.

I suppose you are afraid she might hear something to cause her to lose her faith, I said as she went out with the soup-tureen.

I think we should respect her principles.

The word inflamed me. Superstitions that were rammed into her.

She returned with the roast chicken, and the question had to be dropped until she returned to the kitchen to fetch an apple dumpling; and we did not really settle down to literature or dogma until coffee was brought in and my cigar was alight.

It's a great pity that you always set yourself in opposition to all received ideas. I was full of hope when you wrote saying you were coming to Ireland. I suppose there's no use asking you not to publish. You will always go your own way.

But if I limit myself to an essay entitled Literature or Dogma—you don't object to that?

No, I don't say I object to it; but I'd rather not have the question raised just now.

I see you don't wish to discuss it.

No, I don't mind discussing it. But I must understand you. Two propositions are involved in your statement—which is the one you wish to put forward? Do you mean that all books, which in your opinion may be classed as literature, contain things that are contrary to Catholic

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dogma? Or do you mean that no man professing the Catholic faith has written a book which, in your opinion, may be classed as literature since the Reformation?

I put forward both propositions. But my main contention is that the Catholic may not speculate; and the greatest literature has come out of speculation on the value of life. Shakespeare——

There is nothing in Shakespeare contrary to Catholic dogma.

You are very prompt.

Moreover, I deny that England had, at that time, gone over entirely to Protestantism. Italian culture had found its way into England; England had discovered her voice, I might say her language. A Renaissance has nothing in common with Puritanism and there is reason for thinking this. The Brownists? And the Colonel, who is a well-read man, gave me an interesting account of these earliest Puritans.

The larger part of the English people may have been Protestant, he continued, in 1590; but England hadn't entirely gone over to Protestantism. Besides, England's faith has nothing to do with Shakespeare. Nor does anybody know who wrote the plays.

My dear friend, you won't allow me to develop my argument. It matters nothing to me whether you prefer the lord or the mummer. The plays were written, I suppose, by an Englishman; that, at least will not be denied; and my contention is—— No, there is no reason why I should contend, for it is sufficiently obvious that only an Agnostic mind could have woven the fabric of the stories and set the characters one against the other. A sectarian soul would not have been satisfied to exhibit merely the passions.

Will you charge me again with interrupting your argu-

ment if I say that I know nothing in Shakespeare that a Catholic might not have written?

Well, I think if I were to take down a volume and read it, I could find a hundred verses. I see your answer trembling on your lips, that you don't require a hundred, but two or three. Very well. A Catholic couldn't have written *There is nothing serious in mortality*, for he believes the very contrary; nor could a Catholic have written *A tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing*.

What reason have you to suppose that Shakespeare was speaking in his own person? It seems to me that by assuming he was doing so, you impugn his art as a dramatist, which is to give appropriate speeches to each of his characters; the writer must never transpire in a drama.

I'm afraid your religious zeal spurs you into dangerous statements, and you are in an entanglement from which you will find it difficult to extricate yourself. Shakespeare weaves a plot and sets will against will, desire against desire, but his plays are suffused by his spirit, and it is always the same spirit breathing, whether he be writing about earls or kings, virgins or lights-o'-love. The passage quoted from *Macbeth* is an excellent example of the all-pervading personality of the poet, who knew when to forget the temporal character of *Macbeth*, and to put into the mouth of the cattle-spoiler phrases that seem to us more suited to Hamlet. The poet-philosopher, at once gracious and cynical, wise with the wisdom of the ages, and yet akin to the daily necessity of men's foibles and fashions, is as present in the play of *Macbeth* as in *King Lear*; and the same fine Agnostic mind we trace throughout the comedies, and the poems, and the sonnets, smiling at all systems of thought, knowing well that there is none that outlasts a generation.

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I cannot see why a Catholic might not have written the phrases you quote. One can only judge these things by one's own conscience, and if I had thought of these verses——

You would have written them? I've always suspected you of being an Agnostic Catholic.

The difference between the Agnostic and the Catholic mind seems to me to be this—we all doubt (to doubt is human), only in the ultimate analysis the Catholic accepts and the Agnostic rejects.

We know that the saints suffered from doubt, but the Agnostic doesn't doubt, though he is often without hope of a survival of his personality. A good case might be made out, metaphysically, if it weren't that most of us are without any earthly personality. Why then a heavenly one? You were once a great admirer of Fitzgerald's *Omar Khayyám*, and I doubt if you will dare to say to my face that a Catholic could have written the *Rubáiyát*.

The Colonel was at first inclined to agree with me that there was a great deal that a Catholic could not have written in Fitzgerald's poem; but he soon recovered himself, and began to argue that all that Fitzgerald had done was to contrast ideas, maintaining that the argument was conducted very fairly, and that if the poem were examined it would be difficult to adduce proof from it of the author's Agnosticism.

But we know Fitzgerald was an Agnostic?

You're shifting ground. You started by saying that the poems of Shakespeare and Fitzgerald revealed the Agnosticism of the writers, you now fall back upon contemporary evidence.

I don't think I've shifted my ground at all. If we knew nothing about Fitzgerald's beliefs, there is abundant proof in his writings that he was an Agnostic. You'll have to

admit that his opinions on the nothingness of life and the futility of all human effort, whether it strives after pleasure or pain, would read as oddly if introduced into the writings of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas as sympathetic remarks about the Immaculate Conception would read in the works of Mr. Swinburne or Professor Huxley. The nothingness of our lives and the length of the sleep out of which we came, and the still greater length of the sleep which will very soon fall upon us, is the spring whence all great poetry flows, and this spring is perforce closed to Catholic writers for ever. Do you know the beautiful stanza in Moschus's *Lament for Bion*?

Ah me! when the mallows wither in the garden, and the green parsley and the curled tendrils of the anise, on a later day they live again and spring in another year; but we, men, we, the great and mighty, or wise, when once we have died, in the hollow earth we sleep, gone down into silence, a right long and endless and unawakening sleep.

Could these lines have been written by a Catholic?

The Colonel could not see why not.

Because . . . but, my dear friend, I won't waste time explaining the obvious. This you'll admit—that no such verses occur in Catholic poems?

As poignant expressions regarding the nothingness of life as any in Moschus, Shakespeare, or Fitzgerald are to be found in the Psalms and Ecclesiastes. Man walketh in a vain shadow and troubleth himself in vain.

The Bible wasn't written by Catholics.

The Colonel had to admit that it wasn't, and after watching and rejoicing in his discomfiture for a while I went on to speak of Shakespeare's contemporaries, declaring them to be robust livers, whose philosophy was to

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live out their day in love of wine and women, as frequenters of the Mermaid Tavern and of wenches, haters of the Puritan.

You'll not claim Marlowe, I suppose? You'll admit that there was very little Catholic about him except a very Catholic taste for life. You mentioned just now the Brownists; they were overcome, you tell me, for the time being. But Puritanism is an enemy, if it be really one, that I can meet in a friendly spirit. Landor says that Virgil and St. Thomas Aquinas could never cordially shake hands; but I dare say I could shake hands with Knox. The Puritan closed the theatres, an act which I won't pretend to sympathise with; but England's dramatic genius had spent itself, and for its intolerance of amusement Puritanism made handsome amends by giving us Milton, and a literature of its own. Of course everything can be argued, and some will argue that Milton's poem was written in spite of Puritan influence; but this I do think, that if ever a religious movement may be said to have brought a literature along with it, Puritanism is that one. As much as any man that ever lived, Milton's whole life was spent in emancipating himself from dogma. In his old age he was a Unitarian.

You've forgotten *The Pilgrim's Progress*, written out of the very heart of the language, and out of the mind of the nation.

Thank you for reminding me of it. A manly fellow was Bunyan, without clerical unction, and a courage in his heart that nothing could cast down, the glory and symbol of Puritanism for ever and ever.

Puritanism is more inspiring than Protestantism; it is a more original attitude of mind——

The Agnostic mind is the original mind, the mind which we bring into the world.

SALVE

Milton was a Unitarian, Bunyan a Puritan; where does your Protestantism come in? Who is the great Protestant poet?

I don't limit Protestantism to the Established Church. Protestantism is a stage in human development. But if you want a poet who would shed the last drop of his blood for the Established Church, there is one, Wordsworth, and he is still considered to be a pretty good poet; Coleridge was nearly a divine.

You make a point with Wordsworth, I admit it. He seems, however, to have overstepped the line in his *Intimations of Immortality*.

But you miss my point somewhat; it is that there is hardly any line of Protestantism to overstep.

I set Newman against——

Against whom? Not against Wordsworth, surely? And if you do, think of the others—shall I enumerate?

It wouldn't be worth while; it is evident that all that is best in England has gone into Agnosticism.

And into Protestantism; confronted by Wordsworth and Coleridge, you can't deny to Protestantism a large share in the shaping of modern poetry. But there isn't a Catholic writer, only a few converts.

Newman.

But, my dear Colonel, we cannot for one moment compare Newman's mind to Wordsworth's or Coleridge's? To do so I may contend is ridiculous, without laying myself open to a charge of being much addicted to either writer. Wordsworth moralised Nature away, and it is impossible, for me, at least, to forgive him his:

A primrose by a river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more.

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That nothing more is a moral stain that no time shall wash away. One would have thought that flowers, especially wild flowers, might be freed from all moral obligations. I am an Objectivist, reared among the Parnassians, an exile from the Nouvelle Athènes, and neither poet has ever unduly attracted me. Three or four beautiful poems more or less in the world are not as important as a new mind, a new way of feeling and seeing. Mere writing——

A theory invented on the spot so as to rid yourself of Newman.

There you are mistaken. Allow me to follow the train of my thoughts, and you will understand me better. And don't lose your head and run away frightened if I dare to say that Newman could not write at all. But you have dislocated my ideas a little. Allow me to continue in my own way, for what I'm saying to you to-day will be written to-morrow or after, and talking my mind to you is a great help. I'm using you as an audience. Now, we were speaking about Coleridge, and I was saying that the mere fact that a man has written three or four beautiful poems is not enough; my primary interest in a writer being in the mind that he brings into the world; by a mind I mean a new way of feeling and seeing. I think I've said that before, but no harm is done by repeating it.

If you'll allow me to interrupt you once more, I will suggest that Newman brought a new way of feeling and seeing into the world—a new soul.

I suppose he did; a sort of ragged weed which withered on till it was ninety. It is a mistake to speak of him as a convert to Catholicism; he was a born Catholic if ever a man was born one. Were it not for him the term a born Catholic would be a solecism, for at first sight it doesn't seem very easy to understand how a man can be born a Catholic. A man is born blind, or deaf, or

dumb, a hunchback, or an idiot, but it's difficult to see how he can be born a Catholic. Yet it is so; Newman proves it. A born Catholic would seem to mean one pre-disposed to rely upon the help of priests, sacraments, texts, amulets, medals, indulgences; and Newman, you will not deny, brought into the world an inordinate appetite for texts, decrees, councils, and the like; even when he was a Protestant he was always talking about his Bishop. He was disposed from the beginning to seek authority for his every thought. Obedience in spiritual matters is the watch-word of the Catholic, and surely Newman was always replete with it. He was a born Catholic; he justified the phrase. My dear Colonel, I'm aware that I'm delivering a little sermon, but to speak to you like this is a great help to me. He seems to have been the least spiritual of men, bereft of all sense of divinity. He seems to have lived his life in ignorance that religion existed before Christianity, that Buddhism preceded it, and that in China—— But we need not wander so far afield. Newman was a sectarian, if ever there was one, astride on a rail between Protestantism and Catholicism, timidly letting down one leg, drawing it back, and then letting down the other leg. In the 'sixties men were frightened lest their ancestors might turn out to be monkeys, and a great many ran after Newman clapping their hands in praise of his broken English.

Broken English! interrupted the Colonel.

Yes, broken mutterings about an Edict in the fourth century, and that the world has been going astray ever since. He seems to have really believed that the destiny of nations depended on the chatter of the Fathers, and he totters after them, like an old man in a dark corridor with a tallow-dip in his hand. A simple-minded fellow, who meant well, I think; one can see his pale soul through

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his eyes, and his pale style is on his face. The best that can be said about it is that it is homely. You never saw *The Private Secretary*, did you?

The Colonel shook his head.

When Mr. Spalding came on the stage, saying, I obey my Bishop, I at once thought of Newman, and, though I have no shred of evidence to support my case, I shall always maintain that that amusing comedy was suggested by *The Apologia*. It seems to have risen out of it, and I can imagine the writer walking up and down his study, his face radiant, seeing Mr. Spalding as a human truth, a human objectification of an interest in texts, decrees, and in Bishops. I never thought of it before, but Newman confesses to Mr. Spalding's wee sexuality in *The Apologia*. I have been reading *The Apologia* this morning, and for the first time. Here it is:

I am obliged to mention, though I do it with great reluctance, another deep imagination, which at this time, the autumn of 1816, took possession of me,—there can be no mistake about the fact; viz., that it would be the will of God that I should lead a single life. This anticipation, which has held its ground almost continuously ever since,—with the break of a month now and a month then, up to 1829, and, after that date, without any break at all,—was more or less connected in my mind with the notion, that my calling in life would require such a sacrifice as celibacy involved.

He is himself in this paragraph, and nothing but himself. Even on a subject in which his whole life is concerned he can only write dryly.

And we wrangled for some time over the anticipation which had held its ground almost continuously.

SALVE

I admit that it isn't very good; but how do you explain that he has always been considered a master of English?

All in good time, my dear Colonel. We are now concerned with Newman's mind; it is the mind that produces the style. Listen to this:

The Catholic Church holds it better for the sun and moon to drop from heaven, for the earth to fail, and for all the many millions on it to die of starvation in extremest agony, as far as temporal affliction goes, than that one soul, I will not say, should be lost, but should commit one single venial sin, should tell one wilful untruth, or should steal one poor farthing without excuse.

This passage, I believe, was read with considerable piety and interest by the age which produced it, and I wonder why it has fallen out of favour; for to sentimentalise is to succeed, and it was really very kind of Newman to sentimentalise over the miseries which our lightest sins cause our Creator. An unfortunate case his is indeed, since the Catholic Church holds that venial sins are committed every moment of the day and night. The Creator torments us after we are dead by putting us into hell, but while we are on earth we give him hell. And our difficulties don't end with the statement that we make the Creator's life a hell for him, for we are told that it would be better that all humanity should perish in extremest agony than that, etc. If that be so, why doesn't the Creator bring humanity to an end? The only possible answer to this question is that the Creator and the Catholic Church are not agreed on the point, and it would be pretentious on my part to offer arbitration. They must settle their differences as best they can. I'm afraid, Col-

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onel, you look at me a little contemptuously, as if you thought my criticism frivolous.

Logically, of course, the Colonel answered—logically, of course, Newman is right.

We wasted at least ten minutes discussing how something that seemed utterly absurd could be said to be logical; and to bring the discussion to an end, I reminded the Colonel that Carlyle had said that Newman's mind was not much greater than that of a half-grown rabbit. Perhaps Carlyle libelled the rabbit; he should have said the brain of a half-grown insect, a black-beetle.

But, said the Colonel, do you believe the black-beetle to be less intelligent than the rabbit? In my experience——

I'm inclined to agree with you, but we're wandering from the point. I want to draw your attention to some passages, and to ask you if they are as badly written as they seem to be?

When you say that Newman wrote very badly, do you mean that he wrote in a way which does not commend itself to your taste, or that he wrote incorrectly?

His sentences are frequently incorrect, but I don't lay stress on their occasional incorrectness. An ungrammatical sentence is by no means incompatible with beauty of style; all the great writers have written ungrammatically; I suppose idiom means ungrammatical phrases made acceptable by usage; dialect is generally ungrammatical; but Newman's slips do not help his style in the least. You're watching me, my dear Colonel, with a smile in your eyes, wondering into what further exaggeration my detestation of Catholicism will carry me.

You have abused Newman enough. Let us get to facts. You say that he writes incorrectly.

The passage in which he deploras the suffering that man causes God convinced me that his mind was but a

SALVE

weed, and, though there was no necessity for my doing so, I said: Let us see how he expresses himself. You will admit that a man of weak intellect cannot write a fine style.

Let us get to the grammatical blunders which you say you have discovered in Newman.

I turned to the first pages and read:

He, emphatically, opened my mind, and taught me to think and to use my reason.

Don't you think, Colonel, that emphatically opened my mind is a queer sentence for a master of English style to write, and that we should search in Carlyle or Landor a long while before we came upon such draggle-tailed English as we read on page 7?

He, emphatically, opened my mind, and taught me to think and to use my reason. After being first noticed by him in 1822, I became very intimate with him in 1825, when I was his Vice-Principal at Alban Hall. I gave up that office in 1826, when I became Tutor of my College, and his hold upon me gradually relaxed. He had done his work *towards* me or nearly so, when he taught me to see with my own eyes and to walk with my own feet. *Not* that I had *not* a good deal to learn from others still, but I influenced them as well as they me, and co-operated rather than merely concurred with them. As to Dr. Whately, his mind was too different from mine for us to remain long *on one line*.

I know folks that is in the vegetable line, and I think I know one chap who should be tuk up for the murder of the King's English if he warn't dead already.

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I recollect how dissatisfied he was with an Article of mine in the *London Review*, which Blanco White, good-humouredly, only called Platonic. When I was diverging from him in opinion (which he did not like), I thought of dedicating my first book to him, in words to the effect that he had not only taught me to think, but to think for myself. He left Oxford in 1831; after that, as far as I can recollect, I never saw him but twice, when he visited the University; once in the street in 1834, once in a room in 1838. From the time that he left, I have always felt a real affection for what I must call his memory; for, at least from the year 1834, he made himself dead to me. He had practically *indeed given me up* from the time that he became Archbishop in 1831; but in 1834 a correspondence *took place* between us,

A prize fight takes place; a correspondence begins.

which, though conducted, especially on his side, in a friendly spirit, was the expression of differences of opinion which *acted as a final close* to our intercourse. My reason told me that it was impossible we could have *got on together* longer, had he stayed in Oxford; yet I loved him too much to bid him farewell without pain. After a few years had passed, I began to believe that his influence on me in a higher respect than intellectual advance,

He means than that of intellectual advance.

(I will not say through his fault) had not been satisfactory. I believe that he has *inserted sharp things* in his later works about me. They have not come in my way, and I have not thought it necessary to seek out what would pain me so much in the reading.

The next page consists mainly of quotations from Dr. Whately, who apparently is capable of expressing himself, and we pick up Newman farther on.

The case was this: though at that time I had not read Bishop Bull's *defensio* nor the Fathers, I was just then *very strong* for that ante-Nicene view of the Trinitarian doctrine, which some writers, both Catholic and non-Catholic, *have accused of wearing* a sort of Arian exterior.

I really don't see, said the Colonel, that that sentence is——

Don't trouble to defend it. There is worse to come. But how is it that the writer of such sentences is still spoken about as a master of style? Am I the only man living who has read *The Apologia*? It is almost impossible to read; that I admit.

It would be against my nature to act otherwise than I do; but besides, it would be to forget the *lessons* which I *gained* in the experience of my own history in the past.

One doesn't gain lessons. How shall we amend it?—the experience I gained from the lessons of my own history.

The Bishop has *but* said that a certain Tract is objectionable, *no reason being stated*.

Without giving his reasons, the Bishop has only said that a certain Tract is objectionable, is how the editor of the halfpenny paper would probably revise Newman's sentence. And who will say that the revised text is not better than the original?

As I declared on occasion of Tract 90, I claimed, in behalf of *who would* in the Anglican Church,

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Can he mean those who so desired in the Anglican Church? But it would take too long to put this passage right, for it is impossible to know exactly what the greatest master of lucid English meant——

the right of holding with Bramhall a comprecation with the Saints, and the Mass all but Transubstantiation with Andrewes, or with Hooker that Transubstantiation itself is not a point for Churches to part communion upon,

The kind of English that one would rap a boy of twelve over the knuckles for writing!

or with Hammond that a General Council, truly such, never did, never shall err in a matter of faith,

A thousand years of Catholicism is needed to write like this, so perhaps the present Duke of Norfolk is the author of *The Apologia*.

or with Bull that man had in Paradise, and lost on the fall, a supernatural habit of grace,

The style is the man, a simpleton cleric, especially anxious about his soul; no, I am mistaken—about a Text.

or with Thorndike that penance is a propitiation for post-baptismal sin, or with Pearson that the all-powerful name of Jesus is no otherwise *given* than in the Catholic Church.

What does he mean by given? In what sense? Does he mean that the name of Jesus is *rendu* in all churches in the same way? But, then, what exactly does he mean by given?

The Colonel, who writes a letter to a newspaper as well as anybody I know, took the book from my hand, saying:

SALVE

It is barely credible . . . I can write as well as that myself.

A great deal better, I answered, and we continued to look through *The Apologia*, astonished at the feebleness of the mind behind the words, and at the words themselves.

Like dead leaves, I said.

What surprises me is the lack of distinction, the Colonel murmured.

If the writing were a little worse it would be better, I answered. Am I going too far, my dear Colonel, if I say that *The Apologia* reads more like a mock at Catholic literature than anything else; and that it would pass for such if we didn't know that it was written in great seriousness of spirit, and read with the same seriousness? No Protestant divine ever wrote so badly. Perhaps Newman——

Haven't you read anything but *The Apologia*?

No, and there is no reason why I should.

How would you like to be judged by one book?

I have shown my friends the passages I have been quoting, and they think he wrote better when he was a Protestant.

I see your article on Newman from end to end. That Newman was a great writer until he became a Catholic is a pretty paradox which will suit your style. You will be able to discover passages in his Protestant sermons better written, no doubt, than the passages you select from *The Apologia*. The Colonel lit his candle, and I could hear him laughing good-humouredly as he went upstairs to bed.

It is dangerous to name a quality, I said to him next morning at breakfast, whereby we may recognise a great writer, for as soon as we have done so somebody names somebody whom we must confess deficient in the quality mentioned. The perils of definition are numerous, but

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most people will agree with me that all great writers have possessed an extraordinary gift of creating images, and if that be so, Newman cannot be called a writer. We search vainly in the barren, sandy tract of *The Apologia* for one, finding only dead phrases, very often used so incorrectly that it is difficult to tell what he is driving at; driving at is just the kind of worn-out phrase he would use without a scruple.

You are judging Newman by *The Apologia*.

I admit I haven't read any other book. But dear Edward once invited me to look into—I have forgotten the title, but I remember the sentence that caught my eye—Heresy stalks the land, and you will agree with me that it is hardly an exaggeration to say that the average reporter would be ashamed to write the words . . . unless he were in a very great hurry.

Newman wrote *The Apologia* in a great hurry.

However great your hurry, you couldn't, nor could any of the friends who come here on Saturday night, write as badly, and unless we hold that to be always thin and colourless is a style——

You've a good case against him, but I'm afraid you'll spoil it by overstatement.

My concern is neither to overstate nor to understate, but to follow my own mind, faithfully, tracing its every turn. An idea has been running in my head that books lose and gain qualities in the course of time, and I have worried over it a good deal, for what seemed to be a paradox I felt to be a truth. Our fathers were not so foolish as they appear to us to be in their admiration of *Lara*, *The Corsair*, *The Bride of Abydos*, *The Giaour*; they breathed into the clay and vivified it, and when weary of romance they wandered into theology, and were lured by a mirage, seeing groves of palm-trees, flowers, and a

bubbling rill, where in truth there was nothing but rocks and sand and a puddle. And while Byron and Newman turn to dust Shakespeare is becoming eternal.

There are degrees, then, in immortality?

Of course. The longer the immortality the more perfect it becomes, Time putting a patina upon the bronze and the marble and the wood, and I think upon texts; you never will persuade me that the text that we read is the text read in 1623.

The Colonel raised his sad eyes from *The Apologia* into which they had been plunged.

I'll admit that we never seem to get any farther in metaphysics than Bishop Berkeley. I see, he said a few minutes later, that Newman has written a preface for this new and insufficiently revised edition. Have you read it?

No, but I shall be glad to listen if you'll read it to me after breakfast.

As soon as he had finished his eggs and bacon, the Colonel fixed his glasses a little higher on his nose, and it was not long before we began to feel that our tasks were hard, one as hard as the other, and when the last sentence was pronounced, the Colonel, despite his reluctance to decry anything Catholic, was forced to admit a lack of focus in the composition.

He wanders from one subject to another, never finishing.

Excellent criticism! What you say is in agreement with Stevenson, who told an interviewer that if a man can group his ideas he is a good writer, though the words in which he expresses himself be tasteless, and as you say, Newman, before he has finished with his third section, returns to his first; from the fifth he returns to the fourth, and in the sixth section we find some points that should have been included in the second.

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The Colonel did not answer; and feeling that I owed something to my guest, I said:

The last time you were here you mentioned that you hoped to be able to get one of the gateways from Newbrook.

The Colonel brightened up at once, and told me that he was only just in time, for the stones were about to be utilised by the peasants for the building of pigsties and cottages. But he had followed them in his gig through the country, and had brought them all to Moore Hall, and was now only waiting for me to decide whether I would like the gateway built in a half-circle or in a straight line. The saw-mill he hoped to get into working order very soon.

It will be of great use for cutting up the timber that we shall get out of the Stone Park.

Isn't it in working order?

With emphasis and interest the Colonel began to relate the accident the saw-mill had met with on the way from Ballinrobe; as it was entering the farmyard one of the horses had shied, bringing the boiler right up against a stone pillar, starting some of the rivets. A dark cloud came into his face, and I learnt from him that he had very foolishly given heed to the smith at Ballinrobe, a braggart who had sworn he could rivet a boiler with any man in Ireland; but when it came to the point he could do nothing. The Castlebar smith, a very clever man, had not succeeded any better, but there was a smith at Cong——

A real Cuchulain.

The story, I admit, is assuming all the proportions of an epic, the Colonel replied joyously, and I allowed him to tell me the whole of it, listening to it with half my brain, while with the other half I considered the height of the Colonel's skull and its narrowness across the temples.

A refined head, I said to myself, and it seemed to me that I had seen, at some time or other, the same pinched

skull in certain portraits of ecclesiastics by Bellini and the School of Bellini: but not the Colonel's vague, inconclusive eyes, I added. Italy has always retained a great deal of her ancient paganism; but Catholicism absorbed Spain and Ireland. It is into Spanish painting that we must look for the Colonel, and we find most of him in Velasquez, a somewhat icy painter who, however, relished and stated with great skill the Colonel's high-pitched nose, the drawing of the small nostrils, the hard, grizzled moustache. He painted the true Catholic in all his portraits of Philip, never failing to catch the faded, empty look that is so essentially a part of the Catholic face. Our ideas mould a likeness quickly if Nature supplies certain proportions, and the Colonel—when he fattens out a little, which he sometimes does, and when his mind is away—reminds me of the dead King. Of course, there are dissimilarities. Kingship creates formalities, and the Spanish Court must have robbed Philip of all sense of humour, or buried it very deeply in his breast, for it is recorded that he was so pleased on one occasion with the splendid fight that a bull put up against the picadors, that he did not deem any swordsman in Spain worthy of the honour of killing him; the bull had earned his death from the highest hand in the land, and arming himself with an arquebuse or caliver, he walked across the arena and shot the bull with his own kingly hand. He must have walked towards the bull with a kingly stride—a sloven stride and a kingly act would be incompatible—he must have walked as if to music; but the Colonel has little or no ear for music, and his walk is, for this reason or another, the very opposite to Philip's. He slouches from side to side, a curious gait, the reader will say, for a soldier of thirty years, but very like himself, and therefore one likes to see it, and to see him preparing for it, hustling himself into his old yellow

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overcoat in the passage. He never carries a stick or umbrella; he slouches along, his hands dangling ugly out of the ends of the cuffs. To what business he is going I often wonder as I stand at the window watching him, remembering all the while how he had lain back in his armchair after breakfast, reading a book, his subconsciousness suggesting to him many different errands, and at last detaching him from his book or his manuscript, for the Colonel has always meditated a literary career for himself as soon as he was free from the army.

There are people of to-day, to-morrow, and yesterday; and the Colonel is much more of yesterday than of to-day. If he does not defend the Inquisition directly, he does so indirectly—all religions have persecuted, for it is the nature of man to persecute, and he is unable to understand that Protestantism and Rationalism together redeemed the world from the disgrace of the Middle Ages. His ideas clank like chains about him, but not to the ordinary ear, for the Colonel is reserved by nature; only a fine ear can hear the clanks. Balzac would never have thought of the Colonel for a modern story, but would have placed him—I have sufficient confidence in Balzac's genius to believe that he would have placed him in a Spanish setting; for the Colonel's mind is so archaic that his clothes distress even me. I am not good at clothes, but I am sure it is because his natural garment, the doublet, is forbidden him that he dresses himself in dim grey hues or in pepper-and-salt. He has never been seen in checks or fancy waistcoats, or in a bright-coloured tie. He goes, however, willingly into breeches; at Moore Hall he is never out of breeches; breeches remind him of his racing and hunting days, besides being convenient. So far can his country gear be explained, but why he sometimes comes up to Dublin in breeches, presenting, as I have said, an incon-

gruous spectacle of sport in my drawing-room on a background of impressionist pictures, I am unable to offer any opinion.

XVI

A telegram, sir.

Will you please to get the Colonel's room ready, and tell him, when he arrives, that I shall not be free for a couple of hours? I'm busy with *The Lake*. And about half-past four I went down to the dining-room and found him in an armchair surrounded by books: *Imaginary Portraits*, *Evelyn Innes*, *Wild Wales*, and a book of Irish Folk-Tales, and he was reading Strauss's *Life of Jesus*. He makes some very good points, he said, and I encouraged him to continue in his appreciation of Strauss's skill as a dialectician; but on pressing him to say that the book was influencing him, he said that his mind had been made up long ago.

Then you are merely reading languidly, without taking sides; a cricket-match seen from the windows of a railway train—that's about all. To read without drawing conclusions is fatal. We have known men and women in our youth who could neither read nor write, but who were clever at their trades, far cleverer than those who have come after them. Mahomet could neither read nor write. Forcible education is one of the follies of the century, I continued. We are agreed in that, for how can you educate forcibly? Education demands a certain acquiescence.

Tea was brought in, and the Colonel said he had come up for a meeting of the Coisde Gnotha, and must go back on Saturday.

On Saturday!

I must get back to look after the men.

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Your sawyers? I suppose Paddy Walshe wants some rafters for his barn?

No, there's the garden. Kavanagh is a splendid vegetable grower, but he doesn't understand the fruit-trees. I have to look after them myself. The meeting begins at eight. Would you mind if we were to dine at seven or a little before?

It was irritating to be asked to change the hour of dinner for the sake of so futile a thing as a meeting of the Coisde Gnotha, and though I replied, Of course, I could not refrain from adding: In fifty years' time no one will speak Irish unless you procure a parrot and teach her. Parrots live a long while; an Irish-speaking Polly in a hundred years' time! what do you think, Maurice? And about that time Christianity will be extinct.

The Colonel laughed good-humouredly, he hustled himself into his old yellow overcoat, and went away leaving me disconcerted, irritated against him, and still more against myself, for it was impossible not to feel that I was abominably unsympathetic to other people's ideas. But am I? Only when phantoms are cherished because they are phantoms. We are all liable to mistake the phantom for reality. I followed the Irish language for a while, but as soon as I discovered my mistake I retraced my steps. Not so the Colonel. He knows at the bottom of his heart that the Irish language cannot be revived, that it would take two hundred years to revive it, and that even if it were revived nothing would come of it unless Ireland dropped Catholicism.

The lamp burned brightly on the table, and, rising from the armchair to light a cigar, I caught sight of my face and wondered at my anger against my brother, a sort of incoherent, interior rumbling, expressing itself in single words and fragments of sentences. An evil self seemed

to be stirring within me; or was it that part of our nature which lurks in a distant corner of our being and sometimes breaks its chain and overpowers the normal self which we are pleased to regard as our true self? Every one has experienced the sensation of spiritual forces at war within himself, but does any one ever suspect that the abnormal self which has come up to the surface and is influencing him may be influencing him for his good; at all events, for some purpose other than the generally received one—the desire to lead poor human nature into temptation? The Christian idea of horns and hooves and tail has been rammed into us so thoroughly that we seldom cease to be Christians; but I must have nearly ceased to be one in the evening I am describing, for I seemed to be aware all the while that there was good purpose behind my anger at my brother's untidy mind. I was not certain what adjective to apply to it—untidy, unfinished, or prejudiced.

He reads Strauss's *Life of Jesus*, admitting that no proofs, however conclusive, would persuade him that the son of Mary and Joseph was anything else but the Son of God. Christ never said that he was, and I suppose he knew. Even St. Paul never spoke of him as God. How precisely I can see that brother of mine, I cried, surprised myself at the clearness with which I remembered the long, pear-shaped head with some fine lines in it; but too narrow at the temples, I muttered, and the eyes are vague and lacking in the light of any great spiritual conviction, and they tell the truth, for has he not admitted to me that substantially the host does not change, and the rest is merely whatever philosophical idea you like to attach to it? Worse still, he has said that the Decrees the Pope issues affecting excommunication do not interest him in the least, and this proves him to be a heretic, a

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Modernist. He always eats meat on Friday; of course he may have obtained a dispensation to eat the chicken as well as the egg, but I am not at all sure that he acquiesces in priestly rule enough to apply for a dispensation; and I began to wonder how long it was since his last confession. When the Bishop questioned the parish priest on the subject, the Colonel was very angry, and said it was hitting below the belt. He did not go to Mass when he came to see me in Dublin until I reproached him for neglect of his duties, and then he never failed afterwards to step away to Westland Row, his white hair blowing over the collar of the old yellow overcoat—never failed while I was in the house, but when I left it he remained in bed, so I have been told. He may have been ill, but I don't believe it. There has always been a vein of humbug in the depths of his deeply affectionate nature; when he was a little child of four or five he was caught with his fingers in a jam-pot, but instead of saying, I took the jam because I liked it, he fled to his mother and flung himself into her arms, begging of her not to believe the nurse, crying, I am your own innocent yam (lamb).

The Colonel's key in the lock interrupted my thoughts, and there he was before me, overflowing with anecdote, his hilarity as unpleasing as it was surprising; high spirits sit ill upon the constitutionally sad, and the humorous sententious are very trying at times. His chatter about the doings of the League seemed endless, and I felt that I could not abide that family attitude into which he at once fell: the hand held in front of the fire, the elbow resting on the knee. The Colonel had fattened in the face since his last visit. Everybody should cultivate a kindly patience, imitating Æ, who, while going his way, can watch others going theirs without seeming invidious or disdainful. But Æ was born with a beautiful mind, and

can pass a criticism on a copy of bad verses, and send the poet home unwounded in his self-respect. He will never change. He knows himself to be immortal, and is content to overlook or claim my periodical aggressiveness as part of my character. But not being as wise as Æ, I would alter myself if I could. How often have I tried! In vain, in vain! We are what we are, for better or worse, and there are no stepping stones . . . except in bad verses. Enough of myself and back to the Colonel.

He was telling me how one orator's loquacity had driven his supporters out of the room, and when the amendment was put there was nobody to support it. The incident amused me for a moment, and then a sudden sense of the triviality of the proceedings boiled up in my mind.

Of course, I said, the amendment you speak of was invaluable, and its loss a great blow to the movement. But tell me, do you propose to spend the rest of your life coming up from Mayo to listen to these fellows chattering about the best means of reviving a language which the few who can speak it are ashamed to speak, or have fallen out of the habit of speaking, like Alec McDonnell and his wife?

I have never denied that the difficulties are very great.

But of what use would the language be to anybody if it could be revived? Prayers, I have often said, are equally valuable in whatever language they may be said.

The Colonel smiled a little contemptuously, and his smile irritated me still further.

As I have said a thousand times, unless Ireland ceases to be Catholic——

That question has been gone into.

Gone into; but you've never been able to explain why there is so little Catholic literature. It must be clear to everybody that dogma draws a circle round the mind;

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within this circle you may think, but outside of it your thoughts may not stray. An acorn planted in a plot——

Even if what you say be true, it seems to me that the small languages should be preserved. You were in favour of the movement till——

There's no use going over the whole argument again. You've tried to bring up your children Irish speakers, and have failed.

The Colonel laughed, for he could not deny that he had failed in this respect.

They must have professions.

You would like other people to sacrifice their children's chances of life for the sake of the Irish language, but you are not prepared to go as far as you would like others to go. You will only go half-way.

How is that?

You bring them up Catholics. The younger is in a convent school, and the elder is now with the Jesuits. I don't think that our father would have approved of the narrow, bigoted education which they are receiving.

I cannot see why. He never disapproved of the religious orders.

You must feel that the atmosphere of a convent isn't manly, and will rob the mind of something, warp or bias it in a direction——

Of which you don't approve?

It seems to me that the mind of the child should be allowed to grow up more naturally.

You can't let a boy grow up naturally. He must be brought up in some theory of what is right and what is wrong. Now, I ask why my children should be taught your right and wrong rather than mine?

I admit that they must be taught something.

SALVE

Once you admit that, it seems to me that the parent is the proper person.

It all depends on what you mean by teaching. The Jesuit says: Give me the boy till he is fourteen and I don't care who gets him after. And his words mean that the mind shall be so crushed that he will for ever remain dependent. I don't know if you remember a story . . . our mother used to tell of a beggar woman who went about Ireland with four or five blind children, their eyes resembling the eyes of those who are born blind so closely that every oculist was deceived. But one day a child's crying attracted attention, and it was discovered that the mother had tied walnut-shells over his eyes, and in each shell was a beetle; the scratching of the beetle on the eyeball produced the appearance of natural blindness—an ingenious method, part, no doubt, of the common folklore of Europe, come down to us from the Middle Ages when the Courts of Kings had to be kept supplied with dwarfs, eunuchs, buffoons; amusing disfigurements were the fashion, and high prices were paid for them. We are too sensitive to hear even how a permanent leer may be put on a child's face, but we are very much interested in the crushing, I should say the moulding, of children's minds, and all over Europe the Jesuits are busy preparing monstrosities for the Courts of Heaven.

My dear George, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Teresa, whom you admire so much, were prepared for Heaven in the Catholic religion, and there are others. St. John of the Cross is one to whom I am sure you will graciously extend your admiration.

To them, certainly, much rather than to the inevitable Aquinas; but those you mention belong to the Middle Ages.

Not St. Teresa.

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The Middle Ages existed in Spain long after St. Teresa, for the burning of heretics went on till the end of the eighteenth century. Religions! The world is littered with religions; they grow, flourish, and die, and if you can't see that Christianity is dying——

The Colonel spoke of revivals.

After each revival, I said, it grows fainter, and would be dead long ago if it hadn't been that children are taken young and their minds crushed. The Jesuits have admitted that that is so. Give me the child, they cry.

Toby has learnt nothing from the nuns except a shocking accent, and Rory is learning very little, and dislikes the Jesuits. I'm thinking of sending him to the Benedictines.

Monks or priests, it's all the same. You know how worthless the education was which we received at Oscott.

There was none. I admit that priests don't seem to be very good educationalists.

Then why have your sons educated by priests? Priests are in all the Catholic schools, but there are excellent Protestant schools——

And bring them up Protestants?

Why not?

You, an Agnostic!

Protestantism is harmless, as I have often pointed out to you. It leaves the mind free, or very nearly.

I can understand that you, who seem constitutionally incapable of seeing anything in life but art, should prefer Agnosticism, but I don't understand your proposing a Christian dogma for my children that you yourself don't believe in.

Don't you? Would you like to hear?

Very much.

SALVE

I'll give you three excellent reasons. I look upon Protestantism as a sort of safeguard——

A sort of vaccine?

Just so. If the Agnostic catches the smallpox he generally catches it in an acute form; and ninety-five per cent. remain in the religion they are brought up in. Isn't that so?

Well, let us hear your second reason.

Protestantism supplies a book out of which the child can learn. I think it is John Eglinton who says in one of his essays that, however beautifully a book may be written, it will not be read by the multitude for the sake of its style. Shakespeare is read in England, for England produced Shakespeare; and the Bible is read in England, for the Bible produced Protestantism. And Protestantism produced the Irish Bible, the one beautiful book you have. Catholics are forbidden to read it.

A stupid prohibition, for the difference between the Catholic and the Protestant version is so slight that not one reader in ten thousand would be able to trace it.

Yes, isn't it stupid? But what is to be done? I can think of nothing—can you? We learnt no English at Oscott; any English I know I learnt in Sussex out of the Prayer-book, and gossiping with the labourers, bailiffs, and especially with gamekeepers; gamekeepers speak the best English. I can't tell why, but it is so.

A new reason for preserving the game laws. A sally at which we both laughed.

But I was going to give you a third reason for my preference for Protestantism. Protestantism engenders religious discussion. You'll admit that?

Indeed I will, and can imagine nothing more useless or tedious.

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Useless it may be for the Catholic, who goes from the cradle to the grave with every point of interest settled for him. How, then, can Catholics be intelligent? We know they're not. But what is much more interesting is the fact that they know themselves they are not intelligent. They admit it freely. At dinner the other day I met a Catholic and spoke to him on this subject. He answered me that the Catholic religion absorbs a man's mind so completely that no energy is left for literary activities, only enough for the practical business of life.

I hate Catholics who speak like that. They're worse than Protestants. There are Uriah Heeps, I admit, and plenty of them, in our Church.

Servant-maids and working-folk are quite free from hypocrisy, and often I've heard them say, It's strange we don't get on as well as Protestants. Once I heard a beggar in Galway saying, There must be something in Protestants since they get on so well in the world. A wiser man than you, my dear friend, or shall I say a less prejudiced one? You remember I told you there was no Catholic literature when you were last in Dublin, but I only half stated my case; the discussion wandered into an argument about Newman.

And what have you discovered since then?

That Russian literature is against you, Scandinavian, too, and, worst of all, North and South America.

The mention of North and South America roused the Colonel, and he did not hesitate to say that it always astonished him that North America had produced so little literature.

I believe that South America can show some records of missionary work done among the Indians.

The Colonel replied that South America was colonised much later than North America—an answer which angered

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me, for I knew that the Colonel was relying on my ignorance of history.

The first colonisations were made in Peru and Brazil, you know that very well. But what can it profit you to insist that Catholics have written books since the Reformation? What can it profit you to deny facts? Of course there is a book or two—one per cent., two per cent. of the world's literature—but if you were to tell me that there is no negro literature, you would think me very stupid if I were to answer, Yes, there is. I can produce a good many songs from Hayti, and I once knew a negro who had written a novel. Catholic literature has declined steadily since the Reformation, and to-day it is one degree better than Sambo.

No sooner had the words passed my lips than I saw I had, as the phrase goes, given myself away, for the negroes are nearly all Methodists or Wesleyans, and I mentioned the fact to the Colonel, feeling sure that if I did not do so he would mention it himself, but he refused to accept my suggestion, saying that he had once believed that religion was race and climate, but he thought so no longer. He has sunk deeper into Catholicism than I thought, for he believes now in a universal truth; for him there is no hope, but I cannot allow his children to perish without saying a word in their favour, and I spoke of Rory and Toby again.

My children will have as good a chance of making their way as I have had. I was brought up a Catholic.

Why shouldn't your children have a better chance?

The only way, said the impassible Colonel, that children may be educated is either by abolishing religious education in the schools, and nobody is in favour of that, or by sending them to schools in which they will be taught the religion of their parents.

But what you call bringing up children in the religion of

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their parents is estranging them from every other influence, until they become incapable of thinking for themselves. Give me the child till he's fourteen, and I don't care who gets him afterwards. There is no question of religious truth; there is no such thing, we know that; what concerns me is that your truth is being forced upon your boys to the exclusion of every other. You keep them from me lest they should hear mine.

I hope you will never say anything in the presence of my children that would be likely to destroy their faith. I rely on your honour.

It is no part of my honour to withhold the truth, or what I believe to be the truth, from any human being. The fact that you happen to be their father doesn't give you the right over their minds to deform and mutilate them as you please, any more than it gives you the right to mutilate their bodies. Gelding and splaying—— You don't claim such rights, do you?

And do you claim the right to seek my children out and destroy their faith?

Can you define the difference between faith and superstition? The right I claim is that of every human being, to speak what he believes to be the truth to whomever he may meet on his way. Brotherhood doesn't forfeit me that right.

Then I am to understand that you will seek my children out?

Seek them out, no. But do you keep them out of my way. But, if you think like this, you'd have done better not to have married a Protestant. I suppose your children believe their mother will go to hell; and if you love Ireland as well as you profess to, why did you go into the English army?

It's impossible for me to continue this argument any

longer, your intention being to say what you think will wound me most. What you have just said I know to have been said with a view to wounding my feelings.

No, but to express my mind. So they're not to get a chance? Well, it's a shame. Why shouldn't their mother have as much voice as you have in their education? Why shouldn't I have a voice?

In the education of my children!

We haven't an idea in common. We are as much separated as though we came from the ends of the earth; yet we were brought up together in the same house, we learnt the same lessons.

The Colonel walked out of the room suddenly, and I heard him take his hat from the table in the hall and go out of the house. The door closed behind him, and I sat in the silence, alarmed by his sudden departure. It seemed to me that I could see him walking, hardly conscious of the street he was passing through, absorbed by the horrible quarrel that had been thrust upon us, a quarrel that might never . . . And I began to quake at the thought that we might never be friends again.

The argument had been conducted in quite a friendly spirit, here and there a little heated, but no more, till words had been put into my mouth that wounded him to the quick, sending him out of the house. He would come back and forgive me, no doubt. But was it sure that he would? And even if he did, the quarrel would begin again the next time we met; the discussion had never ceased since the day he had unsuspectingly come up from Mayo to argue against me that literature and dogma are not incompatible. No matter what the subject of our conversation might be, it drifted sooner or later into religious argument, into something about Protestants and Catholics, and a moment after we were

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angry, hostile, alienated. Since boyhood our lives had been lived apart, but we had been united by mutual love and remembrances, and as the years went by we had begun to dream that the end of our lives should be lived out together. He had written from South Africa that there was no one he would care to live with as much as with me, and no words that I can call upon can tell the eagerness with which I awaited his return from the Boer War. He was coming home on six months' leave; and three of these he spent with me in Ely Place—delightful months in which we seemed to realize the dearest wishes of our hearts. Our mutual love of Ireland brought us closer together than we had hoped was possible . . . and then? Bitterness, strife, disunion. He had been an idol in my eyes, and my idol lay broken in pieces about me—broken, and by whom? God knows; not by me . . . I swear it. That he would not write a book about camp-life in South Africa was a disappointment to me; his dilatoriness in getting grandfather's manuscript in order was another; and now his sticking to Catholicism, despite the proofs that I had laid before him of its inherent illiteracy, had estranged us completely.

An endless whirl of thoughts, and a sudden pause on a recollection of the words I had used: If you hate Protestantism, why did you marry a Protestant? There could be no great harm in saying that. A man who has been married for fifteen years generally knows his wife's religion. Nor in the remark that followed it, that notwithstanding his love of Ireland he had gone into the English army; for a man does not go into the English army and remain in it for thirty years without knowing that he is in it; and I began to wonder if he had gone into the army because he was afraid he could not make his living in any other way? Or was there behind his mind, far back in it, some little

flickering thought that if Ireland rose against English dominion he would be able to bring to the services of his country the tactics he had learnt in the enemy's ranks? A sentiment of that kind would be very like him, and I fell to thinking of him, following his life from the beginning of his manhood up to the present time. All his dreams had been of the Irish race, of its literature, of its traditions, and his clinging to Catholicism can be accounted for by his love of Ireland. Or was it that his mind lacked elasticity, and that he failed at the right moment to twist himself out of the theological snare? It must have been so, for one day, while playing at Red Indians in the woods of Moore Hall, during a rest under the lilac-bush that grows at the turn of the drive, I had asked him if he intended to continue to believe in all the priest said about his Sacraments and about God. A look came into his face, and he answered that he couldn't do without it—meaning religion. But why that religion? I asked. The idea of changing his religion seemed to frighten him even more than dropping religion altogether, and he has persisted in that faith, trying to believe all it enjoins, his thoughts and his deeds going down parallel lines—a true Irishman, his dreams always in conflict with reality. . . .

It seemed to me that some time had passed, for when I awoke from my reverie I was thinking of Balzac, thinking that I had read somewhere that it is not ideas which divide us, but *le choc des caractères*. Balzac must have written very casually when he wrote that, for surely the very opposite is the case. Men are drawn together by their ideas; temperament counts for nothing, or for very little. But it is temperament, I said, that creates our ideas, and my mind reverted to the Colonel, and he stood up in my mind, Ireland in essence, the refined melancholy

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of her mountains and lakes, and her old castles crumbling among the last echoes of a dying language. In his face, so refined and melancholy, I could trace a constant conflict between dreams and reality, and it is this conflict that makes Ireland so unsuccessful. But I stop, perceiving that I am falling into the stuff one writes in the newspapers. Why judge anybody? Analyse, state the case; that is interesting, but pass no judgments, for all judgments are superficial and transitory. The Colonel has always been a sentimentalist. Something seemed to break in my mind. Yes, a sentimentalist he has always been. Now I understand him, and I thought for a long while, understanding not only my brother, but human nature much better than I had done at the beginning of the evening. It was like looking under the waves, seeing down to the depths where strange vegetation moves and lives. The waves flowed on and on, and I peered, and I dreamed, and I thought, awaking suddenly with this cry upon my lips: Freed from the artificial life of the army he is free to follow an idea, and the Gael loves to follow an idea rather than a thing, and the more shadowy and elusive the idea the greater the enchantment it lends, and he follows the ghost of his language now with outstretched arms. But how little feeling there is in me! I cried, starting up from my chair. My brother all this while walking the streets, his heart rent, and I sitting, meditating, dissecting him, arguing with myself.

Now, the question to be settled was whether I should go to bed or wait for him to come in. To go to bed would be wiser, and speak to him in the morning. But I should lie awake all night, thinking. It seemed impossible to go to sleep until some understanding had been arrived at.

SALVE

XVII

There seemed a little strain in his voice, and I wondered what thought had passed through his mind last night about me, and if his affection for me had really changed.

If you leave like this it will never be the same again, and I begged of him not to go away. You thought that I spoke with the express intention of wounding your feelings, but you are wrong.

He did not answer for some time, and when I pressed him he repeated what he had said before, adding that the engagement could not be broken.

And when are you going back to the West?

At the end of next week or the week following.

But won't you spend the interval here?

No; I'm going on to see some other friends.

And then?

Well, then I shall go back to the West.

I'm sorry, I'm sorry . . . this religion has estranged us.

Don't let us speak on that subject again.

No, let us never speak on that subject again.

But you can't help yourself.

By going away you'll give importance to words which they really don't deserve. Nothing has happened, only a few words—nothing more. And after all, you can't blame me if I'm interested in your children. It's only natural.

You said you'd seek my children out for the express purpose——

Excuse me; I said I would not seek them out.

And as I stood looking at him the thought crossed my mind that there was a good deal to be said in support of his view, so I said: I suppose that if the father's right to bring up his children as he chooses be taken from him, he loses all his pleasure in his children.

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It seems the more humane view.

His voice altered, and, seeing that we were on the point of being reconciled, I said: You always had more conscience than I had; even when you were four years old you objected to my putting back the clock in the passage to deceive Miss Westby. And in the hope of distracting his thoughts from last night's quarrel, I asked him if he remembered my first governess, Miss Beard. I remember crying when she went away to be married; and it was possibly for those tears that she came to see me at Oscott, and brought a cake with her. A tall, blonde girl succeeded her, but she had to leave because of something the matter with her hip.

The Colonel did not remember either.

Nor grandmother?

Oh yes, I remember grandmother quite well.

But only as a cripple. My first memory is going along the passage with her to the dining-room, and hearing her say the gingerbread nuts were too hard, and my first disappointment was at seeing them sent back to the kitchen. She promised that some more should be made. But a few days or a few weeks after she was picked up at the foot of the stairs. She never recovered from that fall; she never walked again, but was carried out by two villagers in a chair on poles.

I remember seeing her dead, and the funeral train going up the narrow path through the dark wood to Kiltoon.

Half-way up that pathway there is a stone seat. It was she who had it put there. She walked to Kiltoon every day till her accident. She is there now, and father and mother are there. The tomb must be nearly full of us. Are you going there? I'm not. Does it ever occur to you that we have very little more life to live, only the

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lag end of the journey? I cannot believe myself to be an old man.

You're not.

I don't know what else to call myself. How unreal it all is! For if we look back, we discover very few traces of our flight. Our lives float away like the clouds. Father was in London fighting Ireland's battle when mother and I used to spend the evening together in the summer room—she in one armchair, I in another. Our lives begin in a grey dusk. I can remember settling myself in the chair every night and waiting for her to begin her tale of loneliness; and I must have enjoyed it, for when she started up out of her chair, crying, Why, it's eleven o'clock; we must go to bed, I was loath to go. She used to read father's speeches.

To whom?

To grandmother. She was a young woman at the time—not thirty, and was glad when father's political career ended and he returned to live in Moore Hall with her. You're writing his life, and have heard me tell he was pricked by a sudden curiosity to hear me read aloud, and how the long $\int \int$'s broke me down again and again. My mother and Miss Westby were called in, and father assured us that he used to read the *Times* aloud to his parents when he was three. And then I think he ceased to interest himself in my education for some while—a respite much appreciated by me and my governess. He turned to racing——

The usual thing for an Irish gentleman of those days to do when he left politics.

You know about Wolf Dog and Careenna—you have read the subject up; but you don't remember the old Cook—the last of the first racing stud: an old mare that had drifted into the shafts of the side-car that used to take us

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to church and to Ballinrobe. How very Irish it all is! But when father gave up politics, she was sent to the Curragh to be served by Mountain Deer. Her first foal was a chestnut filly—Molly Carew—but she was too slow to win a selling race, and I don't know what became of her. She bred another chestnut filly—the Cat—and she was as slow as her sister—a very vicious animal that nearly killed both my father and mother. After her came Croagh Patrick, a brown colt. There seems never to have been any doubt that he was a good one. I remember hearing—and perhaps you do, too—that when the grooms appeared at the gate with sieves of oats Croagh Patrick always came up the field streets ahead.

No, I never heard that. I'm glad you told me.

All the same, he didn't win his two-year-old races at the Curragh.

Yes, he did; he won the Madrids, for I saw him win. He was a black, ratlike horse, with four white legs. And what I remember best is how I made my way to the railings, and gradually slipped down them till I was on my knees, for I wanted to say a little prayer that the horse might win; and I remember then how I looked round, terribly frightened lest any one had seen me pray.

He couldn't have won the Madrids before he won the Steward's Cup, for the handicapper let him in at six stone. It must have been as a four-year-old you saw him run, or in the autumn. You were a baby-boy when Croagh Patrick went to Cliff's to do his last gallops before running at Goodwood. I was at Cliff's at the time and saw him do them. Father and mother went away with the horse——

And what became of you?

I was left at Cliff's, and enjoyed myself immensely among the stable-boys. There was a green parrot in the

parlour—it was the first time I had ever seen a parrot, and Polly was often brought out into the stable-yard, and I thought it cruel to throw water on her, till it was pointed out to me that the bird enjoyed her bath.

Who looked after you at Cliff's?

I don't know. Mrs. Cliff probably saw that I put on my trousers. But I remember the pony I used to ride out on the downs, and Vulture, a horse so vicious that if he had succeeded in ridding himself of the boy he would have eaten him. The Lawyer was there at the time, the last half-bred that won a flat race. Once I lost myself on the downs. You never heard of my stay at Cliff's?

I always thought that you went straight from Moore Hall to Oscott.

After Goodwood father and mother went off somewhere, and presumably forgot all about me. Of course, they knew I was quite safe.

Among stable-boys! I don't think I should care to leave Rory and Ulick at a racing-stable for three weeks. How long were you there?

A month, perhaps; but I can't say. And then a little kid of nine was pitched headlong into the midst of a hundred and fifty boys. How well I remember leaving Cliff's for Oscott! My one thought at the time was that the train didn't travel fast enough, and all the way I was asking father how far we were from Oscott, and if we should get there before evening. You remember the fringe of trees and the gatehouse rising above them, and the great red brick building, the castellated tower with the clock in it, and the tall belfry? I left father and mother talking with the President in the pompous room reserved for visitors, and raced through the empty playgrounds (it was class-time) delirious; and it was with difficulty that I was found when the time came for

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father and mother to bid me good-bye. They were a little shocked, I think, at my seeming heartlessness, but I could only think of the boys waiting to make my acquaintance. A few hours later they came trooping out of the class-rooms, formed a procession, and marched into the refectory, I bringing up the rear. Father Martin came down the refectory and, to my great surprise, told me that I must hold my tongue. As soon as he had turned his back I asked my neighbour in a loud voice why the priest had told me I wasn't to talk. The question caused a loud titter, and before the meal had ended I had become a little character in the school. I never told you of my first day at Oscott. It seemed to me a fine thing to offer to match myself to fight the smallest boy present in the play-room after supper. But he was two or three years older than I was, and, though a Peruvian, he pummelled me, and the glamour of school-life must have begun to dim very soon—probably that very night, as soon as my swollen head was laid on the pillow. At Hedgeford Mrs. Cliff must have helped me a little, but at Oscott there was no one to help me. Imagine a child of nine getting up at half-past six, dressing himself, and beaten if he was not down in time for Mass. There was no matron, no kindness, no pity, nor, as well as I can remember, the faintest recognition of the fact that I was but a baby. When my parents returned they found that the high-spirited child they had left at Oscott had been changed into a frightened, blubbering little coward that begged to be taken home. In those days children were not treated mercifully, and I remained at Oscott till my health yielded to cold and hunger and flogging. You remember my coming home and hearing that I wasn't returning to Oscott for a year or two.

You very nearly died, and if it hadn't been for cod-liver

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oil you would have died. But how difficult it was to get you to take it!

Those two years spent at Moore Hall were the best part of my childhood. Long days spent on the lake, two boatmen rowing us from island to island, fishing for trout and eels. How delightful! We sought for birds'-nests in the woods and the bogs; I made a collection of wild birds' eggs, and wrote to my school-fellows of my finds. One of our tutors, Feeney, passed you afterwards for the army. We had many tutors, but Father James Browne is the only one that I remember with real affection. He loved literature for its own sake. Father didn't. I always felt he didn't, and that's what separated us.

He was a man of action.

Yes, I suppose he was, and could, therefore, learn lessons.

He seems to have been a model school-boy. It was not till he went to Cambridge——

Whereas I couldn't learn.

You could learn quickly enough when there was anything to be gained that you wanted especially; and the Colonel reminded me that I had learnt up Greek and Latin history in a few weeks, because the reward was a day's outing in Warwickshire.

Any one can learn a little history. I often asked mother if I was really stupid, but was never able to get a clear answer from her. But you often see our old governess—— would you mind asking her?

I have asked her, and she remembers you as the most amiable child she ever knew.

Did she tell you anything more about me?

No; I think that's all she said.

You like seeing the old people who knew us in

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childhood, but I don't. I never know what to say to them.

The Colonel did not answer, and at the end of a long silence I asked him if he remembered being taken to Castlebar and measured for clothes, and travelling over to England in the charge of Father Lavelle, who was going to Birmingham to spend his holidays with his cousin, a provision-dealer.

I can never forget that shop, the Colonel said; the smell of the cheese is in my nostrils at this moment. I always hated cheese.

You didn't like to stay the night there. You asked me, Why did you agree to stay here? I think it was because the people were so common.

I remember nothing of that, but I remember the provision dealer's shirt-sleeves clearly; his face is indistinct.

A plump, cheery fellow, who came round the great piles of butter and cheese and shook hands with Father Lavelle, and was introduced to us, and begged that we should stay to dinner. Dinner was served in the back-parlour, and was interrupted many times by customers.

I don't remember the dinner, but what I remember very well is that a number of people came in after dinner, and that a piper was sent for, and that we were asked to say if he was as good as our Connaught pipers. They all turned towards us, waiting for us to speak, and I can remember my embarrassment, and my effort to get at a fair decision, and wishing to say that Moran was the better piper.

It is curious how one man remembers one thing and another another. The people coming in, and the piper and the discussion about the piping have passed completely out of my memory, but I do remember very well lying down together side by side on flock mattresses in a

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long garret-room under a window for which there was no blind, and you reproaching me again for having consented to stay the night, and I suppose to your complaint I must have answered, You don't know Oscott. But perhaps I didn't wish to discourage you. A cab was called in the morning, and I congratulated myself that there were six miles still between us and that detestable college, and wished the horse would fall down and break his leg.

It was on my lips to say My God! you remember Oscott, and yet you're sending your son to be educated by priests. But quarrelling with my brother would not save the boy, and I said:

Things must have improved since then. Let us hope the windows in the corridors have been mended, and that a matron has been engaged to look after the smaller boys. Do you remember the dormitories, and thirty or forty boys, and a priest in a room at the end to see that we didn't speak to each other? All that was thought of was the modesty of the wooden partition. There were not sufficient bed-clothes, we were often kept awake by the cold, and as for washing—none in winter was possible, the water in the jug being a solid lump of ice in the morning; but our ears were pinched by the Prefect because our necks were dirty. The injustice, the beastliness of that place—is it possible to forget it?

I remember praying on those cold mornings that I might not be sent to the Prefect's room to be beaten. Do you remember the order, Go to the Prefect's room and ask for four or six, and we had to wander down a long passage, doors all the way on the right and left, till we came to the last door? If the Prefect wasn't in we had to wait, and when he came to his room we told him who had sent us to him, and he took out of a cupboard a stick with a piece of waxed leather on the end of it, told us to

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hold out our hands, and we received four or six strokes delivered with all his strength.

He enjoyed it; men do enjoy cruelty, especially priests. I hope the food isn't so bad now as it was in the 'sixties.

The food that was given us at Oscott was worse than bad—it was disgusting, the Colonel answered.

Do you remember the bowl of slop called tea, and the other bowl of slop called coffee, and the pat of grease called butter? Some stale bread was handed about in a basket and that was our breakfast; never an egg—a bleak meal, succeeded by half an hour's recreation, and then more lessons. At dinner, do you remember the iridescent beef, purple, with blue lines in it?

I'm convinced that very often it wasn't beef at all, but the carcass of some decayed jackass.

Whatever it was, I never touched it, but ate a little bread and drank a little beer. You couldn't touch the beef nor the cheese. Nor could my love of cheese enable me to eat it. What was it most like—soap, or decayed cork? It was like nothing but itself. Forty years have gone by and I remember it still.

One day in the week there were ribs of beef——

Those I used to eat; but the worst day of all was Thursday, for it was on that day large dishes of mince came up. I never touched it—did you?

Never.

Do you remember one morning at breakfast lumps of mince were discovered in the tea? The Prefect looked into the bowl handed to him, and acquiesced in the opinion that perhaps no tea or coffee had better be drunk that morning.

But if the Colonel had forgotten that incident, he remembered the tarts; sour damson jam poured into

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crusts as hard as bricks, and these tarts were alternated with a greasy suet-pudding served with a white sauce that made it even more disagreeable.

A horrible place! I muttered; and we continued to speak of those meals, eaten in silence, listening to a boy reading, the Prefect walking up and down watching us, was any place ever more detestable than Oscott? At five o'clock beer was served out—vinegar would have been better. And the bread!

At seven sloppy tea and coffee, greasy butter, bread that looked as if it had been thrown about the floors! And then the dormitories!

The Colonel would not, of course, agree with me that any great harm was done to a boy by giving him over, body and soul, to a priest; but he remembered that our Castleber clothes were soon threadbare and in holes, and our letters home, begging for an order for new clothes, were disregarded.

I think it must have been that father had lost money at racing, and as he hadn't paid the school fees, he didn't like to write to the President. When I left Oscott I used to hear people say they were cold, but I didn't understand what they meant. The hard life of Oscott gave us splendid health, which has lasted ever since.

Yes, it seems to have done that; and that's about all. We learnt nothing.

Nothing whatever; in many respects we unlearnt a great deal. I had learnt a good deal of French from our governess, but I forgot it all; yet we were taught French at Oscott.

Taught French! We weren't even taught English.

It was assumed that we knew English.

The English language begins in the Bible, and Catholics

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don't read the Bible. Do you remember the Bible stories we were given, written in very Catholic English?

Yes, I remember, the Colonel answered; and I think it's a great mistake that the Bible isn't taught in Catholic schools. There is nothing that I admire more than the Psalms—those great solemn rhythms.

We used to hear the Gospel read out in chapel——

The door opened: the parlourmaid had come to tell the Colonel that a man downstairs would like to speak to him, and he left the room abruptly.

He never seems free from business, I muttered. Just as the conversation was beginning to get interesting. Oscott had every chance of turning out a well-educated boy in him, for he was willing to learn; but with me it was different. Oscott didn't get a fair chance. And I sat perplexed, unable to decide whether I could or would not learn, thinking it probable that my brain developed slowly, remembering that my mother had told me that father used to say, George is a chrysalis out of which a moth or butterfly may come. Now, which am I? Would father have been able to tell if he had lived? Can anybody tell me? But why should I want anybody to tell me? I am a reasonable being, and should know whether I am moth or butterfly. But I don't. Every man has asked himself if he is moth or butterfly, and, receiving no answer, he begins to wonder at the silence that has so suddenly gathered round him. Out of the void memories arise, and he wonders if they have risen to answer his question. There was a round table in grandfather's library and it was filled with books—illustrated editions of *Gulliver's Travels* and the *Arabian Nights*; and on the page facing the picture of Gulliver astride on the nipple of a young Brobdingnagian's breast, I used to read how she undressed Gulliver for the amusement of her

girl-friends, setting him astride on the nipple of one of her breasts. As she was forty-five feet high, Gulliver used to lean forward, clasping with both his arms the prodigious breast, very frightened lest he should fall; and I used to think that if she held out her apron I should not mind. But Swift speaks of the smells that these hides exhaled, and disgusted I would close the book and open the *Arabian Nights* and read again and again the story of the two travellers who saw a huge wreath of smoke rise out of the sea; it quickly shaped itself into a Genie, and, terribly frightened, the travellers climbed into a high tree and watched him come ashore and unlock a crystal casket, out of which a beautiful lady stepped to be enjoyed by the Genie, who fell asleep after his enjoyment. As soon as the lady saw she was released from his vigilance, she wandered a little way looking round as if to find somebody, seeking behind the rocks, looking up into the trees. On perceiving the travellers, she called to them to come down, and on their refusal to descend from fear of the Genie, she threatened to awake him and deliver them over to him. Branch by branch they descended tremblingly, and when they were by her she invited one to follow her into a dark part of the wood, telling the other to wait till she returned. After a little while she returned and retired with the second, and when she came back she said: I see rings upon your fingers; each must give me a ring, and your rings added to the ninety-eight in this handkerchief will make a hundred. I have sworn to deceive the Genie who keeps me locked in that casket a hundred times. Even more than the tale of the two travellers, that of the two men who went by night to a tomb appealed to my imagination, for it was related that they descended a staircase, spread with the rarest carpets, through burning perfumes, to a great

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tapestried saloon, where lamps were burning as if for a festival. A table was spread with delicate meats and wines. But the feasters were only two—a young man and woman, now lying side by side on a couch, dead. As soon as the elder man catches sight of them he draws off his slipper and slaps the faces of the dead and spits upon them, to the great horror of his companion, who seizes him by the arms, asking why he insults the dead. The dead whom you see lying before you are my son and daughter; whereupon he begins to tell how his son conceived a fatal passion for his sister. His passion was unfortunately returned, and, to escape from the world which holds such love in abhorrence, they retired to this dwelling. But even here, you see, the vengeance of God has overtaken them.

It had seemed to me that the brother and sister had probably lighted a pan of charcoal, choosing to die rather than that their love might die before them; and their love, so reprobate that it could be enjoyed in a tomb, appealed to my perverse mind, prone to sympathise with every revolt against the common law. Each age selects a special sin to protest against, and in the beginning of the nineteenth century it was incest that excited the poetical imagination. Byron loved his half-sister, and Genesis sheltered his Cain. Shelley's poem *Laon and Cythna* was not in print when I was a child, but a note in the edition of Shelley's works that I discovered in my grandfather's library and took to Oscott College with me informed me that *The Revolt of Islam* was a revised version of it—revised by Shelley himself at the instigation of his publisher, who thought that England was not yet ripe for a poem on the subject of the love of brother and sister. The title *The Revolt of Islam* appealed to my imagination more than the first title, and connected the

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story in my mind with the story that I had read in the *Arabian Nights*; and, delighted by the beautiful names of the lovers, I often allowed my thoughts to wander away during class-time, wondering if they loved each other as deeply as the brother and sister that had perished in the tomb, and Marlow—where the poem was written in the ideal company of his mistress, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin—was for ever sanctified in my eyes.

I was as much given to dreaming as to games, and, determined to indulge myself to the top of my bent, I would lean over my desk, a Latin grammar in front of me, my head clasped between my hands, and abandon myself to my imagination. However cold the morning might be, I could kick the world of rule away and pass into one in which all I knew of love was accomplished amid pale yellow, slowly moving tapestries, within fumes of burning perfume: dim forms of lovers, speaking with hushed voices, floated before me, and their stories followed them, woven without effort. I looked forward to the time apportioned out for the learning of our lessons, for it was only then that I could be sure of being able to leave Oscott without fear of interruption. It was in my mind that I found reality—Oscott and its masters were but a detestable dream. One priest and only one suspected my practice, and he would walk behind me and lay his hand on my shoulder, or rap my skull with his knuckles, rousing me so suddenly that I could not suppress a cry. And then, what agony to look round and find myself in the cold study with an unlearned lesson before me, and the certainty in my heart that when I was called to repeat it I should be sent to the Prefect for a flogging for my stupidity or for my idleness, or for both!

One day coming out of the refectory I said to the Prefect, I brought a volume of Shelley's poems from home

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with me. I have been reading it ever since, and have begun to wonder if it is wrong to read his poems, for he denies the existence of God.

He just asked me to give him the book. The days went by without hearing any more of the volume. It had been sacrificed for nothing, and as soon as the Colonel returned I told him how I had sacrificed my volume of Shelley in the hope of being expelled for introducing an atheistical work into school.

You see you were in the big division and only rumours of your trouble used to reach me. I remember, however, the row you got into about betting; you used to lay the odds.

And once overlaid myself against one horse that had come along in the betting, and had to send ten shillings to London to back him. The Prefect gave me the book-maker's letter and asked me to open it in his presence.

The prize-fight created some little stir.

I remember it came off in the band-room, a sovereign a side, but before either was beaten the watch came running up the stairs to announce that the Prefect was going his rounds.

You were always in a row of some kind, always in that study place learning Latin lines.

Oscott was a vile hole, a den of priests. Every kind of priest. I remembered one, a tall bald-headed fellow about five and thirty who kept me one whole summer afternoon learning and relearning lines that I knew quite well. Every time I went up to the desk to say them his arm used to droop about my shoulders, and with some endearing phrase he would send me back. We were alone, and I could hear my fellows playing cricket outside. I must send you back once more, and when I came up again with the lines quite perfect his hand nearly slipped into my

trouser pocket. At last the five o'clock bell rang and I was still there with the lines unlearned. To be revenged on him for keeping me in the whole afternoon, I went to confession and mentioned the circumstance; I was curious to test the secrecy of the confessional. I was quite innocent as to his intentions, and the result of my confession was that a few days afterwards we heard he was leaving Oscott, and a rumour went round the school that he used to ask the boys to his room and give them cake and wine.

It doesn't follow that——

I know that a Catholic believes that a priest may murder, steal, fornicate, but he will never betray a secret revealed in the confessional. But we won't argue it. Do you remember the little housemaid?

I remember hearing that you had discovered a pretty maid-servant among the hideous lot that collected in the back benches, and I wondered how you managed to distinguish her looks, for you could only get sight of her by glancing over your shoulder.

You were nearly three years younger than I was at the time, and had not reached the age of puberty; myself and a chosen few used to walk together round the playground, telling each other the adventures that had befallen us during the vacations. Do you remember Frank——? He was one of my pals and liked telling of his adventures among maid-servants when he went home for the holidays. We could not stand his introductory chapters, long as Sir Walter Scott's, and used to cry, Begin with the bobbies.

But what has this story got to do with the pretty housemaid that you spotted at the back of the chapel?

Only this. An innocent question revealed my ignorance of woman, and, fearful lest Frank should tell on me, I spoke of Agnes.

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Was that her name?

I don't know. The name started up in my mind and it seemed to me in keeping with my memory of her, a low-sized girl, the shoulders slightly too high, a pointed oval face and demure overshadowed eyes. No one at Oscott had ever looked at a maid-servant before, and in a sudden inspiration I said that I would present Agnes with a bouquet. The project astonished and delighted my companions, and every evening, I waited for her at the foot of the stairs leading to the organ-loft. It wouldn't be possible to offer her my bouquet till she came alone, and every day I answered my companions, No; I didn't get a chance last night. At last my chance came, and, descending the stairs, I offered the girl my flowers, mentioning that they would look well in the bosom of her dress. On another occasion I met her in the dormitories, but she begged me not to speak to her, for if I did she would be sent away.

Is that all?

It was the only thing I could think of to break the monotony of the Oscott day; and if I suggest that one of my boon companions may have yielded to scruples of conscience and betrayed me in confession——

A Catholic is only obliged to tell the sins he commits himself.

By acquiescing in my poor gallantries he may have thought he made himself responsible for them.

You very likely talked openly yourself, and——

Anything rather than admit that the confessional is used as a means of government. For what else do you think the sacrament was substituted?

I was many years at Oscott and never had any reason to suspect that an improper use was made of the confessional.

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The secret leaked out; all secrets do in Catholic communities, and some great trouble must have arisen, or I should not have written to father.

I knew nothing about that.

I wrote the miserable little story to him, adding that if the girl were sent away my conscience would leave me no peace, and that I should marry her as soon as I got the opportunity.

I had no idea it was so serious.

It was mother who told me years after that, on receiving my letter, father ordered one of the grey ponies to be saddled and galloped away to Claremorris to catch the train. I did not think for a minute that my letter would bring him all that way, and when one of the priests, or deacons, or sub-deacons, or bunkers—do you remember the fellows we used to call the bunkers?

Of course I do; the sons of English tradesmen who were educated at Oscott, at our expense, for the priesthood.

When one of those cads came up to me in the playgrounds and told me I was wanted in the visitor's room, my heart sank, and I could hardly crawl up the Gothic staircase. I was in an awful funk, for I could not think of father as being anything else but dreadfully angry with me; whereas he was surprisingly gentle, and listened to my foolish story without reproving me. I don't know if you remember father's eyes—clear, blue eyes—they embarrassed me all the while, making me feel a little hypocrite, for I didn't intend to carry out my threat. Even in those times I was just as I have ever been, very provident about my own life, and determined to make the most of it. I was a little hypocrite, for all the time I was cajoling him, I was thinking what my chances were of being taken out to Birmingham and given a dinner at the Queen's Hotel, a meal which I sadly needed. I wish I could

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remember his words; the sensation of the scene is present in my mind, but as soon as I seek his words they elude me. Northcote came into the room, and I think it became plain to me at once that he had already been speaking to father, and that the girl was not going to be dismissed. You remember Northcote—a great-bellied, big, ugly fellow, whom we used to call the Gorilla. He was almost as hairy, great tufts starting out of his ears and out of his nostrils; the backs of his hands were covered, and hair grew thickly between the knuckles. I was thinking how cleverly I had escaped a thrashing and of the pleasure in store for me—a long drive with my father in a hansom, and of the dinner in the coffee-room of the Queen's Hotel, when the Gorilla startled me out of my reverie. George, he said, has refused to go to confession. At once I felt my father's eyes grow sterner, and my dream at that moment seemed a mirage. George, he said, is this true? The Prefect told me the other day to go to confession, but I had nothing to confess. He insisted, and when I answered that I'd go to the confessor but I could tell him nothing, he ordered me to his room for a flogging. I said I'd like to see the President about that, and I told Dr. Northcote that I had written to you about the housemaid. Our father agreed with the Gorilla that there are always sins to confess for him who chooses to look for them, and I remembered the Gorilla reminding me that, probably, I had not examined my conscience closely. The authorities are all old coaxers when parents are present.

I always liked the Gorilla.

Did you? He asked me if my attention had never wandered at Mass? if I had never lost my temper? or been disobedient to my master? or lazy? It was impossible for me to deny that some of these things had happened, and, feeling that I must be truthful if I were

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to win my father over to my side, I said—and the words slipped out quite easily—But, Dr. Northcote, I'm not sure that I believe in confession, so why should I be obliged to go to confession? The President raised his shaggy eyebrows. It isn't my fault, and to communicate when in doubt would be—— A very grave look must have come into his face, and a certain gravity stole into my father's, and then, in answer to another question, posed with awful deliberation, I remembered saying, and in these very words, But, Dr. Northcote, you didn't always believe in confession yourself. Dr. Northcote was a convert to Catholicism; he had become a priest at his wife's death, and his son was in my class. Our father turned away from the table and walked towards the window, and I can still see his plump back in shadow and one side whisker showing against the light. The Gorilla hesitated, unable to think of an appropriate answer, and father, as if he divined the priest's embarrassment, retired from the window. But I could see he had been laughing.

And did he take you out to Birmingham on that occasion?

I think he did, for I remember a conversation about Shelley's poems with him. But he couldn't have taken me out to Birmingham and left you behind.

I don't ever remember driving out to Birmingham with father.

Not on any occasion?

No.

How very odd. If the Queen's Hotel still exists I could find the table in the coffee-room at which we used to sit. I remember listening in admiration to father talking to Judge Fitzgerald. All the Fitzgeralds were there.

The Fitzgeralds left Oscott together, just before I went there. One of them wrote a book of verses about the

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bunkers, and there was a lawsuit. I only remember our father once at Oscott, and forget the occasion; but I can still see him giving an exhibition of billiards and showing off some strokes.

I don't recollect a billiard-table at Oscott—not in my time. Where was it?

A top room where I never was before. You say you remember a conversation with father about Shelley. Did he admire Shelley?

Not much, I think. He didn't like *The Pine Forest by the Sea*, for I remember his very words, Why do you waste time learning bad verses? He liked the opening lines of *Queen Mab*, How wonderful is Death, Death and his brother Sleep, and spoke of Byron and quoted some verses from *Sardanapalus* which I thought very fine. I remember him saying to me at the end of a religious argument that out of the many religious reformers Christ was the only one that had declared himself to be God and had been accepted as such by his disciples. A very flimsy proof this seemed to me to be of Christ's divinity, and my admiration of father's intelligence declined from that moment. My admiration for him as a kindly human being increased. Our parting was most affectionate; I don't think that he told me; it must have been the Prefect that told me I was not returning to Oscott after the long vacation. I was not to speak, he said, to any of my schoolmates during the remainder of the term. But rumour was soon busy that I had successfully defied the whole College, and many were the attempts made to speak to me, but I shook my head always, smiled and passed on. The outcast is never as unhappy as the herd imagines him to be, and these last six weeks of my Oscott life were not disagreeable to me, and the pleasantest moment of all was when I asked the Prefect on the last day of the term for his permission

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to say good-bye to my school-fellows. So I left Oscott, I said to the Colonel, in flying colours, at least flying the colours which I wished to fly. A detestable place it was to me, mentally and physically. You only suffered physical cold, hunger, and caning, but I suffered in my mind. I couldn't breathe in Catholicism.

You always hated Christianity, especially in its Catholic form.

Only in its Catholic form.

When you were at Oscott there was no question of your becoming a Protestant?

My dear Colonel, I answer you as I answered Edward; one doesn't become a Protestant, one discovers oneself to be a Protestant, and I discovered in those days that magicians and their sacraments estranged me from all religious belief, instead of drawing me closer to it.

The Colonel smiled sadly.

We shall get you back one of these days.

When I lose my self, perhaps. I have often wondered at my hatred of Catholicism, so original, so inherent is it. Sometimes I have wondered if it may not be an inheritance of some remote ancestor.

Not so very remote, the Colonel said.

Why? Weren't we originally a Catholic family?

No, it was our great-grandfather at the end of the eighteenth century that changed his religion.

So our great-grandfather became a Catholic. He went to Spain, I know that, and made a great fortune and married in Spain; but whom did he marry? A Spaniard?

A Miss O'Kelly.

An Irishwoman, a Catholic of course? And it was she who persuaded him to change his religion. Theology and sex go together. If there were no sex there would be no theology.

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Her family, the Colonel said, had been in Spain so long that she was practically a Spaniard.

And grandfather was an Agnostic, mother told me, so there is only one generation of pure Catholicism behind me. You don't know how happy you've made me. Your news comes as sweetly as the south wind blowing over the downs.

NOTE.—My great-grandfather did not become a Catholic. His will instructed his executors that he was to be buried in the old family burial-ground at Ashbrook. This matter is cleared up earlier in this volume.

XVIII

The Colonel stayed with me a few days longer, and when the morning came for him to go, we bade each other good-bye with *empressement*, a little more than usual, as if to convince ourselves that we loved each other as before; but neither was deceived, and I went up to the drawing-room with a heavy heart.

Miss Gough was waiting there, and she began to read aloud from yesterday's dictation, but her voice was soon drowned in the tumult of my thoughts. Of what use for us to see each other if we may only talk of superficial things? Never more can there be any sympathy of spirit between us. We are solitary beings who may at most exchange words about tenants and saw-mills. How horrible! And while talking of things that do not interest me in the least, there will be always a rancour in my heart. We shall drift farther and farther apart; the fissure will widen into a chasm. We are divided utterly, and sooner or later he will leave Moore Hall and will go to live abroad. The cessation of Miss Gough's voice awoke me, and looking up I caught sight of her eyes fixed upon me reproachfully.

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You're not listening.

I beg your pardon; I've been away. Now we'll go on.

But the scene of the story I was dictating was laid in Mayo round the shores of Lough Cara, and the woods and islands and the people whom I had known long ago drew my thoughts from the narrative, and before long they had drifted to a house that my brother and I had built with some planks high up in a beech-tree. One day a quarrel had arisen regarding the building of the house, and to get my own way I had pretended not to believe in his love of me, causing him to burst into tears. His tears provoked my curiosity, and it was not long before I began to think that I would like to see him cry again. But to my surprise and sorrow the gibe did not succeed in producing a single tear. He seemed indifferent whether I thought he loved me or not.

It was after fifty years had gone by that this long-forgotten episode floated up out of the depths.

I was as detestable in the beginning as I am in the end, I said, like one speaking in his sleep; and catching Miss Gough's eyes again, I laughed a little. I'm absent-minded this afternoon.

You've been working too hard lately, and you didn't go for your walk yesterday.

You think it would be better for me to go for a long walk than to sit here dreaming or dictating rubbish? I dare say you're right; I give you your liberty. She closed her notebook and rose from the table. But I don't know where to walk.

Why not go to Merrion and call on John Eglinton? You always like talking to him.

He's at the Library this afternoon.

And there are your cousins at Blackrock.

Yes, I might go to see them.

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Then till to-morrow.

She went away leaving me stretched in an armchair by the window staring at the drooping ash by the wicket, trying to think of some way of passing the time, but unable to discover any except by going into the garden and helping the gardener to collect the large box snails with which the plants were infested. He threw them into a pail of salt and water, saying, It is fine stuff for them; but I liked to spill a circle of salt and watch them trying to crawl out of it. Alas! one does not change—not materially. Once on a time I used to hunt the laundry cats with dogs, but the Colonel was never cruel. No one corrected me, no one reproved me; I grew up a wildling; and that wouldn't matter so much if—— The sentence remained unfinished, for at that moment I remembered the intonation in the Colonel's voice: It will be a great grief to me if you declare yourself a Protestant. The words were simple enough, but intonation is more important than words; it goes deeper, like music, to the very roots of feeling, to the heart's core.

But if I sit here brooding any longer I shall go mad, and I rushed upstairs and shaved myself, and buttoned myself into a new suit of clothes. The apparel oft creates a new man, I said, stepping briskly over the threshold, hastening my pace down Baggot Street, assuring myself that meditation is impossible when the pace is more than four miles an hour. But at the canal bridge it was necessary to stop, not to watch the boats as is my wont, but to consider which way I should take, for I had gone down Baggot Street and the Pembroke Road, over Ballsbridge, and followed the Dodder to Donnybrook so often that my imagination craved for some new scenery. But there is no other, I cried, and it was not until the trees of the Botanic Gardens came into view that I roused a

little out of my despondency. I had never asked for a key, or solicited admission to these gardens, so gloomy did they seem; but thinking that I might meet some student from Trinity whom I could watch pursuing knowledge from flower to flower, from tree to tree, who might even be kind enough to instruct me a little and divert me, I crossed the tram-line and peered through the tall railings into the dark and dismal thickets. There did not seem to be anything in these gardens but ilex-trees; the most unsuitable tree to my present mood, I muttered, and went away in the direction of Blackrock, thinking of my handsome cousin Fenella and her good-natured innocent brother. It seemed to me that I should like to pay them a visit, that their house would soothe me. One likes certain houses, not because the people that live in them are especially clever and amusing, but because one finds it agreeable to be there. But in Mount Merrion questions would be put to me about the Colonel. Mount Merrion would bring all the miserable business up again, and I stopped at the corner of Serpentine Avenue undecided.

If I could only think of something, I said; anything . . . provided I have not done it a hundred times before. I have never followed the Dodder to the sea! And wondering how it got there, I turned into Serpentine Avenue. As there was no sign of the river at this side of the railway, I concluded that it must lie on the other side, for all rivers reach the sea unless they go underground. The gates of the level-crossing were closed when I arrived, and a sound of angry voices reached my ears. A little group of wayfarers, I said, cursing a gatekeeper in Dublin brogue. Will you come out to Hell over that. The devil take you, what are you doing in there? Is it asleep you are? and so forth, until at last an old sluggard rolled out

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of his box with a dream still in his eyes, and grumbling, opened the gates, receiving damnations from everybody but me, who was nowise in a hurry.

A passer-by directed me, and I followed a beautiful shady road, admiring the houses with gardens at the back, until I came to a great stone bridge, unfortunately a modern one, but built out of large blocks of fine stone. A black, drain-like river flowed through the arches, for the Dodder is nowhere an attractive river, not even when flowing through the woods at Dartry. At the Lansdowne Road there is a wood and at the end of the wood a pleasant green bank overhung with hawthorn boughs. But the Dodder is inert and black as a crocodile. The current moves hardly at all, and my priest, I said, would prefer to face a couple of miles of Lough Cara on a moonlight night. He would come out of the Dodder clothed in mud, but out of Lough Cara he would rise like Leander from the Hellespont, but with no Hero to meet him.

And throwing myself on the green bank, my thoughts began to follow the priest's moods as he wandered round the thickets of Derrinrush—mood rising out of mood and melting into mood. The story seemed to be moving on very smoothly in my imagination, and I know not what chance association of images or ideas led my thoughts away from it and back to the evening when the Colonel had left my house when I told him that he might as well castrate his children as bring them up Catholics. He had forgiven me my atrocious language, it is true, for the Colonel's beautiful nature can do more than pardon; he is one of those rare human beings who can forgive. He is unable to acquire new ideas, the old are too intimate and intense; family ties are dear to him, and he is a Catholic because he was taught Catholic prayers when he was a little child and taken to Carnacun Chapel. His life

is set in his feelings rather than in his ideas, and he expressed himself fully and perfectly when he said: It will be a great grief to me if you declare yourself a Protestant, and it seemed to me that I should be guilty of a dastardly act if I were to bring grief into my brother's life. God knows, thought I, he has received stabs enough from fortune, as do all those whose hearts compel them as his did on Carlisle Bridge, six months ago. It pleased me to remember the scuffle. We had heard a woman cry out as we returned from a Gaelic League meeting, and looking back I said: A Jack cuffing his Jill round a cockle stall, one of the many hundred women that are cuffed nightly in Dublin. Before I could say a word the Colonel had rushed to her assistance, and a fine old boxing-match began between the cad and the Colonel at one in the morning; and if the cad had happened to have some pals about, the Colonel would certainly have been flung into the Liffey. He did not think of the danger he was running, only of rescuing some oppressed woman.

A diabolical act it would be to grieve him mortally in the autumn of his life, now that he is settled in Moore Hall in the enjoyment of his first freedom after thirty years of military discipline. I can't do it. The Colonel did not come into the world, as the saying goes, with a silver spoon in his mouth, and had to make up his mind before he was twenty how he was to get a living. There was no time for consideration as to the direction in which he would like to develop. If he had had a little money he might have gone to the Bar, and he would have made a good lawyer; but success at the Bar comes after many years. In those days the army examination was difficult; he was plucked the first time, and was sufficiently pooh-poohed at home, very likely by me who could never pass any examination. He said very little, but his mind con-

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centrated in a fierce determination to get through, and he passed high up. Mother began at the bottom of the list trying to find him, but the housemaid cried out: Why he's here, ma'am, ninth! He was first out of Sandhurst, went to India and was stationed in the Mauritius, and fought in the first South African War.

He returned to India, and was not long at home before he had to go out again to South Africa, where he commanded his regiment through all the fierce fighting of Colenso and Pieter's Hill. He had to risk his life again and again, and submit himself to a coil of duties for thirty years before he earned enough to support a wife and children, and it is outrageous that I, who have enjoyed my life always, never knowing an ache or a want, should dare to intervene and tell him—I could not repeat the atrocious words again. It seemed to me, as I lay on the green bank, that I had no right to declare myself a Protestant. It is bad that the children should see their parents divided in religion; it would aggravate the evil were their uncle to declare himself on their mother's side. But I wonder why he married a Protestant? Because he was compelled by his heart, and did not meanly stop to consider the value of the sacrifice he was making. That is why, and I got up from the green bank and walked towards the next bridge, wondering how it was that I was never able to bask in the sun like the couples to be seen every fine evening in the Park; rough boys and girls sitting on the benches, their arms about each other, content to lie in the warmth of each other's company without uttering a word—at most, Are you comfy, dear? I'm all right. But I have never been able to enjoy life without thought, and should not have lain on that green bank.

On the other side of the bridge there are no sweet

hawthorns, only waste lands, and a ragged path along the water's edge interrupted by stiles; at the third bridge this path ceases altogether; warehouses and factories rise up steeply; the Dodder cannot be followed to the sea by that bank; but a flight of steps exists on the other side, and these took me down to a black cindery place intersected by canals. It was amusing to trip across several lock gates and to find oneself suddenly on the quays. But where was the Dodder? To recross the lock gates and go up that flight of steps would be tiresome, and I decided to miss the honour of discovering the mouth of that river, and give my attention to a great four-master, the hull of the ship standing thirty feet out of the water, and all the spars and yards and ropes delicate yet clear upon the grey sky.

But there seemed to be nobody about to whom I could apply for permission to visit the ship, and my choice lay between continuing my walk regretfully along the quays or going up the gangway uninvited and explaining to the first sailor that my intentions were strictly honest. There must be somebody on board; the ship wouldn't be left unprotected, and up the gangway I went. But the ship seemed as empty as the shells that used to lie along the mantelpieces in the 'sixties, and I walked about for a long time before happening upon anybody. At last a simple, good-natured Breton sailor appeared whom I had no difficulty in engaging in conversation. He told me that the ship had come from Australia with corn and would go away in ballast, first to Glasgow, and if the wind were favourable they would get to Glasgow in about eighteen hours. The ship's next destination was San Francisco, and to get there they would have to double Cape Horn, and I thought of the sailor ordered aloft to take in sail. However black the night, he would

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have to climb into the rigging, and if the ship doubled the Cape in safety he would be up among the yards furling sail after sail as she floated through the Golden Gates. At San Francisco they would take in corn and—

En dix-huit mois nous serons revenus avec du blé.

Et après?

Alors je reverrai ma patrie et mon fils, and he took me into a little closet and showed me his son's photograph. And when I had admired the young man, he asked me if I would like to go over the ship, and we walked about together, but there was nothing to see . . . only a number of bonhams.

Voilà le manger des matelots.

Pas pour nous, monsieur. C'est le capitaine et les officiers qui mangent le porc frais.

Vous êtes breton, mais vous parlez bien français; peut-être encore mieux que le breton.

Non pas, monsieur; je suis du Finistère, une des provinces où on parle breton.

The sailor revived my ardour for the preservation of small languages, and we talked enthusiastically of the Bretons, the remnant of the race that had once possessed all France and colonised Britain. The Irish Celts were a different race, and spoke a language that he would not understand; but he would understand some Welsh, and the Cornish language better still

La dernière personne qui parlait le Cornouailles fut une vieille femme, morte il y a cent ans. On sait son mon, mais pour le moment . . .

Vous ne vous le rappelez pas, monsieur?

N'importe. Cela ne vous semble pas drôle d'entendre les syllabes celtiques lorsque vous grimpez sur la vergue du perroquet dix ou douze mètres au-dessus des mers houleuses du Cap Horn?

SALVE

Non, monsieur, puisque je travaille avec mes compatriotes.

Bien, sûr, bien sûr; vous êtes tous bretons.

And, slipping a shilling into his hand, I pursued my way along the quays, stopping to admire the cut-stone front of a house in ruins; its pillared gateway and iron railings seemed to tell that this indigent riverside had seen better days. Behind it was a little purlieu overflowing with children, and a few odd trades were ensconced amid the ruins of warehouses. A little farther on I came upon a tavern, a resort of sailors. It looked as if some wild scenes might happen there of an evening, but very likely the crews from the fishing-smacks only came up to play a game of cards and get a little tipsy—nowadays the end of an Irishman's adventure. We are supposed to be a most romantic and adventurous race, and very likely we were centuries ago; but we are now the smuggest and the most prosaic people in the world; our spiritual adventures are limited to going to Mass, and our enjoyment to a race meeting. A mild climate, without an accent upon it, does not breed adventures. Quay followed quay. There were plenty of fishing-smacks in the Liffey, and these interested me till I came to Carlisle Bridge; and leaning over the parapet, my thoughts followed the Liffey beyond Chapelizod. It is between Chapelizod and Lucan that it begins to gurgle alongside of high hedges through a flat country enclosed by a line of blue hills about seven or eight miles distant; after Chapelizod it is a brown and bonny river, that would have inspired the Celt to write poetry if he had not preferred priests to the muses. As I said just now, he is supposed to be romantic and adventurous, but he is the smuggest and most prosaic fellow in the world. As Edward says, men in Dublin do not burn. The Celt is supposed to be

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humorous, but he is merely loquacious. We read of Celtic glamour, but what is known as Celtic glamour came out of Sussex. Shelley came to Ireland to redeem the Celt. A mad freak, very much like mine. All the same, he got some beautiful poetry out of Ireland:

The oak

Expanding its immeasurable arms,
Embraces the light beech. The pyramids
Of the tall cedar overarching, frame
Most solemn domes within, and far below,
Like clouds suspended in an emerald sky,
The ash and the acacia floating hang
Tremulous and pale.

And those lines:

A well,

Dark, gleaming, and of most translucent wave,
Images all the woven boughs above,
And each depending leaf, and every speck
Of azure sky . . .

are very like Lucan; and there are other passages still more like Lucan. But unable to capture the elusive lines, my thoughts followed the river as far as I know it, as far as Blessington, to Poulaphouca. *Phuca* is a fairy in Irish, and no doubt the fairies assembled there long ago; but they have hidden themselves far away among the hills, between the source of the Liffey and the Dodder. When O'Grady wrote the divine Dodder, he must have been thinking of long ago, when the Dodder roared down from the hills, a great and terrible river, sweeping the cattle out of the fields, killing even its otters, wearing through the land a great chasm, now often dry save for a peevish trickle which, after many weeks of rain, swells into a harmless flood and falls over the great weir at Tallaght, but only to run away quickly or collect into pools among

great boulders, reaching Rathfarnham a quiet and demure little river. At Dartry it flows through mud, but the wood above it is beautiful; not great and noble as the wood at Pangbourne; Dartry is a small place, no doubt, but the trees that crowd the banks are tall and shapely, and along one bank there is a rich growth of cow-parsley and hemlock, and there are sedges and flags and beds of wild forget-me-nots in the stream itself. The trees reach over the stream, and there are pleasant spots under the hawthorns in the meadows where the lovers may sit hand in hand, and nooks under the high banks where they can lie conscious of each other and of the soft summer evening. A man should go there with a girl, for the intrusion of the mere wayfarer is resented. There is a beautiful bend in the stream near the dye-works, and the trees grow straight and tall, and out of them the wood-pigeon clatters. Green, slimy, stenchy at Donnybrook, at Ballsbridge the Dodder reminds one of a steep, ill-paven street into which many wash-tubs have been emptied; and after Ballsbridge, it reaches the sea; as has been said, black and inert as a crocodile.

If O'Grady had called the Dodder the Union river, he would have described it better, for the Dodder must have been entirely disassociated from Dublin till about a hundred years ago. The aristocracy that inhabited the great squares and streets in the north side of Dublin could have known very little about this river; but as soon as the Union became an established fact, Dublin showed a tendency to move towards the south-east, towards the Dodder. Every other city in the world moves westward, but we are an odd people, and Dublin is as odd as ourselves. The building of Merrion Square must have been undertaken a little before, or very soon after the Union; Stephen's Green is late eighteenth century; Fitzwilliam

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Square looked like 1850. The houses in the Pembroke Road seemed a little older, but we cannot date them earlier than 1820. Within the memory of man, Donnybrook was a little village lying outside Dublin; to-day it is only connected with Dublin by a long, straggling street; and beyond Donnybrook is a beautifully wooded district through which the Stillorgan Road rises in gentle ascents, sycamores, beeches, and chestnuts of great height and size shadowing it mile after mile. On either side of the roadway there are cut-stone gateways; the smooth drives curve and disappear behind hollies and cedars, and we often catch sight of the blue hills between the trees.

At this moment, I said, the transparent leaves are shining like emeralds set in filigree gold; the fruit has fallen from the branches, the shucks are broken, boys are picking out the red-brown nuts for hacking. And the same sun is lighting up the chestnut avenue leading to the Moat House. Stella's shadow lengthens down her garden walk. She would like me to startle her solitude with my voice. Why not? And, while watching her in imagination lifting the pots off the dahlias and shaking the earwigs out, the thought shot through my heart that I might not be able to bear the disgrace of Catholicism for the Colonel's sake, causing me to quail and to sink as if I had been struck by a knife.

It has begun all over again, I said, and all the evening it will take me unawares as it did just now. It will return again and again to conquer me in the end, or at every assault the temptation may be less vehement. Go home I cannot. Distraction is what I need—company. I'll go to Stella, and we will walk round the garden together; she will enjoy showing me her carnations and dahlias, teasing me because I cannot remember the name of every trivial weed. I suppose it is that men don't care

SALVE

for flowers as women do; we never come back from the country our arms filled with flowers. We are interested in dogmas; they in flowers. A mother never turned her daughter out of doors because she could not believe in the doctrine of the Atonement. Women are without a theological sense, thank God! We shall linger by the moat watching the trout darting to and fro, thinking of nothing but the trout, and after supper we'll stray into the painting-room and go over all the canvases, talking of quality, values, and drawings. And then——

But she may not be at home; she may have gone to Rathfarnham in search of subjects; she may have gone to Sligo; she spoke last week of going there to stay with friends. To find the Moat House empty and to have to come back and spend the evening alone, would be very disappointing, and I walked up and down the bridge wondering if I should risk it. All my life long I shall have to bear the brand of Catholicism. I shall never escape from my promise except by breaking it, and forgetful of Stella, I followed the pavement, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, lost in surprise at my own lack of power to keep my promise. Sooner or later I shall yield to the temptation, so why not at once? But it may pass away. Stella will be able to advise me better than anybody, and I fell to thinking how she had been the refuge whither I could run ever since I had come to Ireland, sure of finding comfort and wise counsel.

Car!

XIX

She is quite right, I said to myself, as I took a seat under the apple-tree by the table laid for dinner under the great bough—she is quite right. I must leave Ireland

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if I am not to grieve my brother. And it would be well to spread the news, for as soon as everybody knows that I'm going, I shall be free to stay as long as I please. Æ will miss me and John Eglinton; Yeats will bear up manfully; Longworth, too, will miss me, and I shall miss them all. . . . But are they my kin? And if not, who are my kin? Steer, Tonks, Sickert, Dujardin—why enumerate? Ah, here is he who cast his spell over me from across the seas and keeps me here for some great purpose, else why am I here?

The warm hour prompted you, Æ, to look through the hawthorns.

It was the whiteness of the cloth that caught my eye.

And you were surprised to see the table laid under the apple-tree in this late season? But the only change is an hour less of light than a month ago; the evenings are as dry as they were in July; no dew falls; so I consulted Teresa, who never opposes my wishes—her only virtue. Here she comes across the sward with lamps; and we shall dine in the midst of mystery. My fear is that the mystery may be deepened by the going out of the lamps. Teresa is not very capable, but I keep her for her amiability and her conversation behind my chair when I dine alone. Teresa, are you sure you've wound the lamps; you've seen the oil flowing over the rim? She assured me that she had. You cannot have seen anything of the kind, I answered. The lamp has not been wound. At that moment the wicket slammed. Whoever this may be, Æ, do you entertain him. It is you, John Eglinton? Teresa and Moderator Lamps are incompatible. Next year I shall devise a system of arboreal illumination.

But I heard to-day that you're thinking of leaving us.

Who has been tittle-tattling in the Library this afternoon?

SALVE

I wasn't in the Library this afternoon; so it must have been yesterday that I overheard some conversation as it passed through the turnstile.

But you aren't thinking of leaving us? Æ asked.

Not to-morrow, nor the day after, nor next year; I can't leave till the end of my lease, and by then you'll have had enough of me; don't you think so?

You're not really thinking of leaving us?

The only foundation for the rumour is, that I mentioned to a lady the other day that I didn't look upon Ireland as the end of my earthly adventure. And she must have told one of her neighbours. Twenty-four hours are all that is required for news to reach the National Library. John's face darkened. The National Library should not be spoken of as a house of gossip, even in joke.

But you'll never find elsewhere a house as suitable to your pictures, as beautiful a garden to walk in, or friends as appreciative of your conversation. You'll not find a finer intelligence than Yeats' in London, or John Eglinton's.

I am certain I shall never find myself among a more agreeable circle of friends. I am heart-broken, so necessary are you all to me. Each stands for something.

I should like to hear what Æ stands for in your mind. Can you tell us?

He makes me feel at times that the thither side is not dark but dusk, and that an invisible hand weaves a thread of destiny through the daily woof of life. He makes me feel that our friendship was begun in some anterior existence.

And will be continued——

Perhaps, Æ. How conscious he is of his own eternity! I said, turning to John Eglinton.

Yet you are leaving us.

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How insistent he is, John! And yet, for all we know, he may be the first to leave us. He has certain knowledge of different incarnations. The first was in India, the second in Persia, his third, of which he keeps a distinct memory, happened in Egypt. About Babylon I am not so sure. But Æ dislikes irreverence, especially a light treatment of his ideas, and I did not dare to add that in Heaven he is known as Albar, but asked him instead, if he were redeemed from the task of earning his daily bread, would he retire to Bengal and spend the rest of his life translating the Sacred Books of the East. His answer to this interesting question we shall never know, for, yielding to the impulse of a sudden conviction, John Eglinton interjected:

If Æ leaves Dublin it will not be for Bengal but for Ross's Point, formerly haunted by Mananaan MacLir and the Dagda, and now the Palestine of an interesting heresy known as Ætheism.

At the end of our laughter Æ said:

Now, will you tell us what idea John Eglinton stands for?

He and you are opposite poles, I answered. You stand for belief, John Eglinton for unbelief. On one side of me sits the Great Everything, and on the other the Great Nothing.

And which would you prefer that death should reveal to you? John Eglinton asked. Nothing or Everything? You don't answer. Admit that you would just as lief that death discovered Nothing.

It is easy to imagine a return to the darkness out of which we came—out of which I came; and difficult to imagine my life in the grey dusk that Æ's eyes have revealed to me. But since you deny the worth of this life——

SALVE

I do not deny, John Eglinton answered.

Yes, by your abstinence from your prose you deny the value of your life. He doubts everything, Æ—the future of Ireland, the value of literature, even the value of his own beautiful prose. Watch the frown coming into his face! I am forgetting—we mustn't speak of a collected edition of his works lest we spoil for him the taste of that melon.

Who else is coming to dinner? John Eglinton asked.

Conan said he would come, and he will turn up probably in the middle of dinner, pleading that he missed his train.

Let us hear what idea Conan stands for, said John Eglinton.

An invisible hand introduces a special thread into the woof which we must follow or perish, and as we stand with girt loins a peal of laughter often causes us to hesitate.

Laughter behind the veil, said John, and he spoke to me of a poem that he had received from Conan for publication in *Dana*. He had it in his pocket, and would be glad if I would say how it struck me. Only two stanzas, hardly longer than a Limerick. But the poem could not be found among the bundles of paper he drew from his pocket, and when he gave up the search definitely, Æ said:

I'm going to write the myth of your appearance and evanishment from Dublin, Moore; the legend of a Phooka who appeared some years ago, and the young people crowded about him and he smelted them in the fires of fierce heresies, and petrified them with tales of frigid immoralities, and anybody who wilted from the heat the Phooka flung from him, and anybody who was petrified, he broke in twain and flung aside as of no use, and at last only four stood the test: Æolius, because he was an artist

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and was enchanted with the performances of the Phooka; Johannes also remained, because he was of a contrary disposition and was only happy when contrary or contradicting, and the Phooka gave him the time of his life. There was Olius, or Oliverius, who was naturally more ribald than the Phooka, and had nothing to learn in blasphemy from him, but undertook to complete his education; and there was Ernestius, who practiced Law, and could not be brow-beat; and to these four the Phooka revealed his true being.

You'll write that little pastoral for the next number of *Dana*, won't you Æ? for we're short of an article.

When I find the true reason of the Phooka's sudden disappearance, I'll write it.

You mean that you would like me to tell you the true reason. But is there a true reason for anything? There are a hundred reasons why I should not remain in Ireland always. And then, it being impossible for me to resist Æ's eyes, I said: Well, the immediate reason is the Colonel, who says it will be a great grief to him if I declare myself a Protestant.

But you aren't thinking of doing any such thing? You can't, said John Eglinton. As I was about to answer Æ interrupted:

But I never thought of the Colonel as a Catholic. I used to know him very well some years ago, and I always looked upon him as an Agnostic.

He may have been in his youth, like others; but he is sinking into Catholicism. The last time he came to Dublin we quarrelled, and I thought for good, on account of what I said to him about his children. Don't ask me, Æ, to repeat what I said; it would be too painful, and I wish to forget the words. We shall never be the same friends as we were once, but we are still friends. I succeeded in persuading him to stop a few days longer, and

during those days, while trying to avoid all religious questions, we fell to talking of family history, and he mentioned, accidentally of course, that my family isn't a Catholic family, that it was my great-grandfather that 'verted—my grandfather wasn't a Catholic, but my father was, more or less, in his old age. I assure you the news that there was only one generation of Catholicism behind me came as sweetly as the south wind blowing over the downs, and I said at once I should like to declare myself a Protestant. It was then that he answered that it would be a great grief to him if I did so. I shouldn't so much mind grieving him in so good a cause if I hadn't used words that drove him out of the house. My dilemma was most painful—to bear the shame of being considered a Catholic all my life or——so I consulted a friend of mine in whom I have great confidence, and she said: If you can't remain in Ireland without declaring yourself a Protestant, and wouldn't grieve your brother, you had better leave Ireland.

But were you in earnest when you told your brother you'd like to declare yourself a Protestant? John Eglinton asked.

I don't joke on such subjects.

What means did you propose to take? A letter to the *Times*?

I had thought of that and of a lecture, but decided that the first step to take would be to write to the Archbishop.

But the Archbishop would ask if you believed in a great many things which you don't believe in.

Everything can be explained. I take it for granted that, being a man of the world, he would not press me to say that I believed in the resurrection of the body. St. Paul didn't believe in it. I can cite you text after text——

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We're not in disagreement with you; but we're thinking whether Dr. Peacock will accept your interpretation of the texts.

You think that the Archbishop would ask me to accept the bodily resurrection of Christ?

I'm afraid, said John Eglinton, that you'll have to accept both body and spirit.

I hadn't foreseen these difficulties. Æ tried to prove to me that I should stay in Ireland, and now you are providing me with excellent reasons for leaving.

It's only contrary John that's talking, said Æ in his most dulcet tones. You'll never leave us.

Well, I've told you, Æ, that I can't leave till the end of my lease. My dear Æ, sufficient for the day, or for the evening, I should have said. I see Teresa and the gardener coming down the greensward, and soon the refreshing odour of pea soup will arise through the branches. Now, the question is, whether we shall eat the melon with salt and pepper before the soup, or reserve it till the end of dinner and eat it with sugar. But where's Conan? Teresa, will you kindly walk across and ask——

The wicket clanged, and we watched the author of most of the great Limericks coming towards us.

There was a young man of St. John's, I cried.

My masterpiece . . . it was always popular, he added, dropping his voice, as Yeats does when he is complimented on *Innisfree*. It was always popular, and from the first. But you remind me of a tale of long ago—not the Trinity, though there are bread and wine by you. I am thinking of some Latin poet—it is Moore that puts the story into my head—a Latin poet banished to the Pontic seas—Ovid sitting with his friends.

So you've heard the news?

I have heard no news, none since my parlour-maid

burst into my study with the news that the lamps were lighted in the garden and that the company were at table; and what better news could I hear than that?

You haven't heard that Moore is leaving us?

Leaving us! I hope his friend Sir Thornley Stoker hasn't discovered anything very special in Liffey Street. He has been up and down there many times lately on the trail of a Sheraton sideboard, and Naylor has been asked to keep it till an appendicitis should turn up. The Chinese Chippendale mirror over the drawing-room chimney-piece originated in an unsuccessful operation for cancer; the Aubusson carpet in the back drawing-room represents a hernia; the Renaissance bronze on the landing a set of gall-stones; the Ming Cloisonnée a floating kidney; the Buhl cabinet his opinion on an enlarged liver; and Lady Stoker's jewels a series of small operations performed over a term of years.

We broke into laughter; he is very amusing, Æ whispered; and at the end of our laughter I explained that Sir Thornley was supreme in the suburbs of art; but as soon as he attempted to storm the citadel, to buy pictures, he was as helpless as an old housewife.

How many Sir Joshuas and Gainsboroughs have I saved him from!

If he ever sells his collection I suppose it will fetch a great deal of money.

It never will be sold in his lifetime, John, but at his death there will be a great auction. The terms of the will are explicit, arranging not only for his own departure but for the departure of the curiosities. Wound in an old Florentine brocade, he will be laid in a second-hand coffin, 1 B.C., and driven to Mount Jerome; and on the same evening the curiosities will leave for England, Naylor, Sir Thornley's chief agent, accompanying them

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to Kingstown; and standing at the end of the pier, two yards of crêpe floating from his hat like a gonfalon, and a Renaissance wand in his hand, his sighs will fill the sails of the parting ship, without, however, his tears sensibly increasing the volume of the rising tide, and when the last speck disappears over the horizon he will fall suddenly forward.

But for what feat of surgery did a grateful patient send him the second-hand coffin?

Conan continued to pile imagination upon imagination until the conversation drifted back to the point from which it had started. Had I really made up my mind to leave Dublin?

My dear Conan, if you'll stop talking Moore will tell you why he conceives himself to be under an obligation to leave us.

I'm sure I beg pardon. I didn't believe in the possibility of losing you till you're carried to the woods in Kiltoom, the spot mentioned in the chapter of *The Lake* which you read to us last Saturday under this tree.

It's only this, Conan, that John Eglinton heard in the National Library——

Well, of course, if it was heard in the National Library—and Conan went off into a peal of laughter, bringing a dark and perplexed look into John's eyes.

Well, Conan, if you want to hear why I thought of leaving Ireland, not to-day or to-morrow, but eventually, I'll tell you, but I must not be interrupted again. Æ and John Eglinton, who have no Catholic relations, will have some difficulty in understanding me, but you will understand, and they will understand, too, when I remind them that at Tillyra years ago dear Edward insisted on my making my dinner off the egg instead of the chicken, and on going to Mass on Sunday. He is interested, and

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so exclusively, in his own soul that he regards mine, when I am visiting him, as essential to the upkeep of his. Now, I can't help thinking that if I remain in Ireland and were to fall dangerously ill at Tillyra, the spiritual tyranny of years ago might be revived in a more serious form. His anxiety about his soul would force him to bring a Catholic priest to my bedside, and if this were to happen, and I failed to yell out in the holy man's ear when he bent over me to hear my confession To hell with the Pope, the rumour would go forth that I died fortified by the rites of the Holy Catholic Church.

But you are not leaving us because you think you're going to die at Tillyra, and that Edward will bring a priest to your bedside?

No, that would be hardly a sufficient reason for leaving my friends; but I confess that I should like to die in a Protestant country among my co-religionists.

Moore is thinking of declaring himself a Protestant.

The Colonel has said that it would be a great grief to him if I were to do so; but you'll excuse me, Conan, if I don't stop to explain, for I notice that Æ hasn't touched his fish, and that Teresa has begun to despair of being able to attract his attention to the lobster sauce. Æ, I shall be obliged to ask everybody present to cease talking, so that you may eat your fish. The spirit in you must have acquired a great command over the flesh for that turbot not to tempt you. It tastes to me as if it had only just come out of the sea. A capon follows the turbot, the whole of our dinner; but have no fear, the bird is one of the finest, weighing nearly five pounds.

What beneficent Providence led it into such excesses of fat? cried Conan. It neither delved, nor span, nor wasted its tissues in vain flirtation; a little operation released it from all feminine trouble, and allowed it to spend its days

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in attaining a glory to which Moore, with all his literature, will never attain—the glory of fat capon. At the end of our laughter, Conan cried: The unlabouring brood of the coop. You know Yeats's line, The unlabouring brood of the skies? For a long time I thought that Yeats was referring to the priests, but he must have been thinking of capons; no, he knows nothing of capons. He must have been thinking of the stars.

Oh, songless bird, far sweeter than the rose!
And virgin as a parish priest, God knows!

Fearing that Conan's jest might scandalise the gardener, and remembering that there was only white wine on the table, I sent him to the house to fetch the red. Teresa could remain, for she had told me she had not been to her duties for many a year, and I had come to look upon her as one of my sheaves.

A more fragrant bird was never carved, and I beg of you, Æ, to eat the wing that the Gods have given you. He lived and died for us. And here is the gardener with the wine that comes to me from Bordeaux in barrels—a pleasant, sound dinner wine. I don't press it upon you as a vintage wine, but I am told that it is by no means disgraceful. You see I am dependent upon others, only knowing *vin ordinaire* from *Château Lafitte* because of my preference for the former. I warrant that the innocent nuns up there, now all abed, wondering why the lights are burning in my garden, are better bibbers than anybody at this table, except perhaps Conan. All a-row in their cells they lie, wondering what impiety their neighbour is organising. I suppose you have all heard the report that I have re-established the worship of Venus in this garden, bringing flowers to her statue every morning?

Perhaps they think these lamps are an illumination in her honour, Æ suggested.

Causing them to look into their mirrors oftener than the rule allows. There was a time when I liked to stand at my back window and watch them following winding walks under beautiful trees, while their neighbours, the washerwomen, blasphemed over their wash-tubs. The contrast between the slum and the convent garden, separated by a nine-inch wall, used to amuse me; but now I take no further interest in my nuns, not since they have put up that horrible red-brick building—an examination hall or music-room——

Spoiling excellent material for kitchen-maids, said Conan.

Be that as it may, the most doleful sounds of harps and violin come through the windows, spoiling my meditations. In Dublin there is no escape from the religious. If I walk to Carlisle Bridge to take a car to the Moat House I meet seminarists all along the pavement, groups of threes and fours; and full-blown priests flaunt past me—rosy-checked, pompous men, dangling gold watch-chains across their paunches, and tipping silk hats over their benign brows——

Their vulpine brows, Cornan said.

A black queue stretching right across Dublin, from Drumcondra along the Merrion Road. The other day a particularly aggressive priest walked step for step with me as far as Sydney Parade, and it seemed to me that when I altered my pace he altered his. I was going on to see John Eglinton, and no sooner had I outstepped the priest than the great wall of the convent confronted me. I wonder where all the money comes from?

Out of Purgatory's bank, Conan answered cheerfully; and there is no fear of them overdrawing their account,

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for money is always dribbling in. Nothing thrives in Ireland like a convent, a public-house, and a race-meeting. Any small house will do for a beginning; a poor-box is put in the wall, a couple of blind girls are taken in, and so salubrious is our climate that the nuns find themselves in five years in a Georgian house situated in the middle of a beautiful park. The convent whose music distracts your meditation is occupied by Loreto nuns—a teaching order, where the daughters of Dublin shopkeepers are sure to acquire a nice accent in French and English. St. Vincent's Hospital, at the corner, is run by nuns who employ trained nurses to tend the sick. The eyes of the modern nun may not look under the bed-clothes; the medieval nun had no such scruples. Our neighbourhood is a little overdone in convents; the north side is still richer. But let's count what we have around us: two in Leeson Street, one in Baggot Street and a training college, one in Ballsbridge, two in Donnybrook, one in Ranelagh; there is a convent at Sandymount, and then there is John Eglinton's convent at Merrion; there is another in Booters-town. Stillorgan Road is still free from them; but I hear that a foreign order is watching the beautiful residences on the right and left, and as soon as one comes into the market—— You have been out hawking, my dear Moore, and I appeal to you that the hen bird is much stronger, fiercer, swifter than the——

The tiercel.

The tiercel, of course, for while he was pursuing some quarry at Blackrock, the larger and the stronger birds, the Sister of Mercy and the Sister of the Sacred Heart, struck down Mount Annville, Milltown, and Linden. All the same, the little tiercel has managed to secure Stillorgan Castle on the adjacent hillside, a home for lunatic gentlemen, most of them Dublin publicans.

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Like my neighbour Cunningham, who only just escaped incarceration.

His was a very tragic story, said John Eglinton. Did you never suspect him of being a bit queer?

It often seemed odd not to exchange a good-morning from doorstep to doorstep. His old housekeeper was affable enough; she would bid me a kindly greeting when I returned home after a short absence in the West, and she must have gossiped with my servants, for some of the mystery with which he surrounded himself vanished. I certainly did hear from somebody that his rule was never to have a bite or sup outside his own house; it must have been my cook who told me, and now I come to think of it she added, somewhat contemptuously, that he dined in the middle of the day and went out for his walk at three o'clock.

As the clock struck he sailed forth, a most laughable and absurd little man, not more than two inches over five feet; a long, thick body was set on the shortest possible legs, and he was always dressed the same, in a yellow overcoat and wide grey trousers not unlike dear Edward's. It would be an exaggeration to say that Cunningham was one of the sights of Dublin when he rolled down the pavement for his walk with a thick stick in his hand, a corpulent cigar between his teeth, a white flower in his button-hole. He was one of the minor sights of Dublin as he went away towards the Phoenix Park, a jolly little fellow to the casual observer, but to me, who saw him every day, his good humour seemed superficial and to overlie a deep-set melancholy.

The melancholy of the dwarf, Conan said under his breath.

His walk was always up the main road of the Phoenix Park, as far as Castleknock Gate and back again, and I

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think his old housekeeper told Miss Gough that he wouldn't miss his walk for the King of England. You asked me if I knew him; I never saw anybody more determined not to make my acquaintance. When we passed each other in the street he always averted his eyes, and if I had been polite I should have imitated him, but I could not keep myself from looking into his comical eyes turned up at the corners, and wondering at the great roll of flesh from ear to ear, and at the chins descending step by step into his bosom. It was from Sir Thornley Stoker that I learned how determined he was not to make my acquaintance. You can't guess, he said one day, whom I have let out of the room? Your next-door neighbour, Cunningham. I begged him to stay to meet you, but it was impossible to persuade him. He said, Oh, no, I won't meet George; and on Sir Thornley pressing him to give a reason, he refused, urging as an excuse that I was an enemy of the Church. But I think myself that he was afraid I would put into print some of the stories that it was his wont to tell against the priests. He had stories about everybody, even about me. That very afternoon Sir Thornley could hardly speak for laughing. If you had only heard him just now telling—— But tell me what it was. I can't tell you. It's the Dublin accent and the Dublin dialect. It was all about *Evelyn Innes*. You don't know what you've missed, and he turned over in his chair to laugh again. No, there's no use my trying to tell it; you should hear Cunningham. But I can't hear Cunningham; he won't know me. At last, apologising for spoiling the story, Sir Thornley told me that I must take for granted the racy description of two workmen who had come to Upper Ely Place to mend the drains in front of my house. After having dug a hole, they took a seat at either end, and sat spitting into it from time to time in

solemn silence, until at last one said to the other. Do you know the fellow that lives in the house forninst us? You don't. Well, I'll tell you who he is: he's the fellow that wrote *Evelyn Innes*. And who was she? She was a great opera-singer. And the story is all about the ould hat. She was lying on a crimson sofa with mother-of-pearl legs when the baronet came into the room, his eyes jumping out of his head and he as hot as be damned. Without as much as a good-morrow, he jumped down on his knees alongside of her, and the next chapter is in Italy.

The crimson sofa with the mother-of-pearl legs, and the baronet as hot as be damned, would be about as much of your story as a Dublin workman would be likely to gather from the book, John Eglinton said.

The touch that *Evelyn Innes* is all about the old hat is excellent, Conan added, and then became grave like a dog that licks his lips after a savoury morsel. And continuing, I told them how, in the last three months before his death, we all noticed a great change in Cunningham; his face turned the colour of lead, and the old housekeeper often talked to Miss Gough about him, not saying much, expressing her alarm as old women do, with a shake of the head. One day she said the master had gone very queer lately, that he would sit for hours brooding, not saying a word to anybody; and it was about three weeks after that she rushed into our house distracted, wringing her hands, speaking incoherently, telling us that, not finding her master in his bedroom when she took him up his cup of tea, she had gone to seek him in the closet, and not finding him there, she had rushed up to the top landing. He was after hanging himself from the banister, she wailed, and I sent for the police and for his solicitor and sat on the stairs till they came. No one will ever know what he suffered. Didn't I tell Miss Gough that

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he would sit for hours, and he not saying a word to any one? He must have been thinking of it all that time, and little did I understand him when he said—many and many's the time he said it as he went upstairs to bed: They'll never get me as long as I've got this right hand on my body.

I don't know if the tragedy transpires in my telling, but what I see is a retired publican overcome by scruples of conscience, his failing brain filled with memories of how he had beguiled customers with stories about the clergy into drinking more than was good for them. A man of that kind would very soon begin to believe that the allies of the clergy, the demons, were after him, and that he could only save himself by giving all his money for Masses for the repose of his soul. And that is what he did. It all went in Masses, or nearly all; the relations got a very small part, after threatening to contest the will. But what interests me is the agony of mind that he must have suffered week in, week out, repeating, They'll never get me as long as I've got this right hand on my body. The phrase must have run in the old house-keeper's head, and somebody, seeing that his mind was giving away and fearing lest he might kill himself, may have said to him: You had better put yourself under restraint. His adviser may have suggested John of God's, and this advice, though well meant, may, perhaps, have destroyed what remained of his poor mind. They'll never get me as long as I've got this right hand on my body. It was with that phrase he went up to bed one evening and hanged himself next morning from the banister with a leather strap. Miss Gough met him coming home the evening before he killed himself, and she tells me that she'll never forget the look in his face. Have you ever seen a maniac, and the cunning look out

of the corner of the eyes which says: Now you think you're going to get the best of me, but you aren't. She remembers noticing that look in his face as he passed her, his two hands thrust into the pockets of his short overcoat. He was bringing home the strap, for the old woman said at the inquest that he had bought it that evening. I suppose he was hiding it under his overcoat. I wonder why he waited till early next morning before hanging himself. Poor little man! That strap was the great romance of his life.

The phrase jarred a little. No one answered, and then, his voice hardly breaking the silence, John Eglinton spoke of a tragedy that occurred almost under his own windows, the barred windows of an old coaching inn, at the end of a little avenue of elm trees, down at Merrion, overlooking the great park in which the convent stands. A nun had been found drowned, whether by her companions or by the gardener was not related in the newspapers—merely the fact that she had been found in the pond one morning. It was stated at the inquest that the nun was a sleep-walker, and the verdict returned was one of accidental death. The verdict of suicide in a moment of temporary insanity would not have been agreeable to the nuns, but to me, a teller of tales, it is more interesting to think that she had gone down in the night to escape from some thought, some fear, some suffering that could be endured no longer. She was free to leave the convent; the bars that restrained her were not iron bars, but they were not less secure for that. She may have suffered, like Cunningham, from scruples of conscience, and gone down in despair to the pond.

And while you were dressing yourself to go to the National Library, she was floating among water-weeds and flowers.

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Moore is thinking of Millais's *Ophelia*, said Æ.

Yes, and I was thinking of *Evelyn Innes*. The most literary end for her would be to have drowned herself in the fish-pond.

I'm sorry it didn't occur to you.

It did occur to me many times, and I could see and hear the nuns coming down in the morning and finding her floating.

A body doesn't float, Æ said, till nine days after. He can't shake himself free from the memory of *Ophelia*.

Conan, who had been left out of the conversation for a long time, was getting irritated, and he jumped into it as an athlete jumps into the arena.

Moore is wondering what thought, what fear, what scruple of conscience may have sent her down to that pond, as if it were not quite obvious what drove her down there. She was in love with John, who would not listen to her, and one night, finding that he had put bars on his window, she walked towards the pond, as Moore would say, like one overtaken by an irreparable catastrophe.

Æ and I laughed. John looked a little puzzled and a little vexed, as he always does at any illusion to himself. The wicket-gate clanged, and Teresa came across the greensward, saying, Please, sir, you're wanted on the telephone, and Conan disappeared quickly in the darkness.

We all wished—or perhaps it would be more exact if I said that I wished—to discuss Conan now that he had left us, and, seeking for some natural transition, I watched a moth buzzing round the globe of the lamp, and thought of the desire of the moth for the star. Conan would be able to repeat the poem, but that transition would be too obvious. It was the moon that gave me one—the yellow

sickle rising on a leaden sky among the arches and chimneys of the convent.

We have heard what Conan thinks of the nuns; now I wonder what the nuns would think of Conan?

Æ spoke of his reckless imagination and his power of perceiving distant analogies, connecting the capon and the priests with Yeats's line, *The unlabouring brood of the skies*; and, better still, the house of symbols, the antique coffin, and the disconsolate dealer standing at the end of Kingstown Pier watching the furniture departing under a smoke pall.

I wonder what he will become?

I was much struck, John Eglinton said, at Meyer's prophecy. Do you remember it? He said that he had known many young men like Conan, all very defiant until they were thirty; and every one, after thirty, had developed into commonplace fathers of families, renowned for all the virtues.

I wonder will that be the end of Conan?

A deep silence followed, and then, half to myself and half to my companions, I said:

Do you think he has shaken himself free from Catholic superstitions?

John Eglinton was not sure that he had done this.

Merely telling stories about the avarice of priests is not enough; a man must think himself out of it, and I'm not sure that Meyer isn't right. Catholics are Agnostic in youth, quiescent in middle age, crawl-thumpers between fifty and sixty.

Then we began to talk, as all Irishmen do, of what Ireland was, what she is, and what she is becoming.

There is no becoming in Ireland, I answered; she is always the same—a great inert mass of superstition.

Home Rule, said Æ will set free a flood of intelligence.

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And perhaps the parish priest will drown in this flood.

Æ did not think this necessary.

Do you think the flood of intelligence will penetrate into the convents and release the poor women wasting their lives?

I'm not thinking of nuns, John Eglinton said; those who have gone into convents had better remain in them; and Home Rule will be of no avail unless somebody comes with it, like Fox or like Bunyan, bringing the Bible or writing a book like the *Pilgrim's Progress*—— Moore is too much of a toff.

The Messiah will not wear the appearance that you expect him to wear. Salvation always comes from an unexpected quarter. It may come from Æ, it may come from me, it may come from you.

John laughed scornfully at the idea that he should bring anybody anything.

It was against my advice, John, that you named your magazine after the goddess; you should have called it *The Heretic*.

You are quite right, Æ. We want heresy in Ireland, for there can be no religious thought with heresy. Spain declined as soon as she rid herself of her heretics, if one can call Mohammedanism a heresy; at least, it was a competitive religion; the persecution of the Protestants in France was followed by the expulsion of the Jesuits and the confiscation of their lands. No country can afford to be without heretics, and, in view of the tendency of Catholic countries to rid themselves of their clergy, wouldn't it be a good thing for the Irish Bishop to send Logue to the Vatican so that he might explain to His Holiness the necessity of Protestantism? You needn't look further than Ireland for an apt illustration, holy

Father. If, on the passing of the Home Rule Bill, we are set to work to persecute the Protestant minority, the terrible fate of exile may be mine. We must look ahead, holy Father.

Logue may beg His Holiness to withdraw the *Ne Temere* decree, said John Eglinton.

I wouldn't advise Logue to be too explicit. The decree can be politely ignored by the Irish Bishops. When a Catholic girl who is going to marry a Protestant approaches the priest to learn in what religion her children shall be brought up, he will answer her: In the religion of your husband. But my husband is a Protestant. My dear daughter, we do not know if he'll remain a Protestant; we rely on you to use every effort to persuade him from the errors of Protestantism, so that your children may be brought up in our Holy Church. And to the young man who wishes to marry a Protestant girl the priest will say: Your children will be brought up in the religion of their mother. But their mother is a Protestant. We do not know, my dear son, that your wife will remain a Protestant; if you will do all in your power to bring her into the one true fold, I am confident that you'll succeed.

The idea is an ingenious one, said John Eglinton, and Teresa came across the sward to tell me that Mr. Osborne, Mr. Hughes, Mr. Longworth, Mr. Seumas O'Sullivan, Mr. Atkinson, and Mr. Yeats, were waiting in the dining-room.

Will you have coffee in the house or out here, sir?

We had better have it in the house. The table has to be cleared. And Teresa, please place a lamp at the wicket, for if you don't you'll certainly break my dessert service and hurt yourself. Come, Æ, I've got a cigar for you that I think will please you, and afterwards you can smoke your pipe.

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XX

In what part of London do you think of settling? John Eglinton asked, as we passed out of the Library.

I haven't given the matter a thought, I answered.

The fireman accosted John in the vestibule, and we waited till the last stragglers had passed out and the great doors were closed.

Would you care for a walk down the Pembroke Road and back by Northumberland Road over the canal bridge before going to bed?

Of course I should; I haven't been out all day, but——
You're tired?

No, I'm not tired; and in the hope that he would not speak again of my departure from Ireland, I fell into his step, a little annoyed with myself, however, for I had not spoken truthfully when I said: I haven't given the matter a thought. I had even written to Tonks asking him to look out for a house for me, and he had found a house that would suit me in Swan Walk; his letter was in my pocket, and during my walk with John I could read in my thoughts: You had better come over and see it at once, for it is one of those houses that do not remain long without a tenant. I remarked whenever the conversation dropped: I shall have to warn all my friends in London of my coming, and when John bade me good-night I returned to Ely Place determined to answer Tonks' letter before going to bed. But something held me back, and turning from the writing-table I said: To-morrow morning; and every morning after breakfast from that day on I was held back whenever I approached the writing-table with the intention of writing to Tonks. And it may have been to get the house in Swan Walk behind me that I wrote to Dujardin, who

is always looking forward to seeing me in an *appartement* in Paris with five or six rooms and enough wall space for my pictures, and pleasant armchairs in which we could sit smoking cigars and discussing *The Source of the Christian River*. A few weeks later he wrote saying he had discovered the needed *appartement* and would I come over at once? My trouble, said I to myself, has been transferred from London to Paris. I must write to the landlord of number four, Ely Place, telling him that I intend to give up the house at the end of the lease. But half-way across the carpet on my way to the writing-table I was stopped by an inexplicable apathy, and feeling a little scared went out for a walk and brooded on Rome and Canterbury.

There are past moments that retain the sensual conviction of a present moment, and one of these is the September evening of which I am speaking; a dark evening it was under the trees at the corner of the Appian Way. I must have come through the Clyde Road, admiring as I passed the tall pillared porticoes which give the villas a certain elegance, and the lofty trees, elms, beeches, dense chestnuts, and dark hollies, amid which the villas stand. In my humour it was a sort of solace to stop and to remember Auteuil. The rue de Ranelagh exists, doesn't it? *Elle donne sur la rue de l'Assomption, n'est-ce pas?* Some such random association of names may have caused me to keep to the left in the direction of Upper Leeson Street, or it may have been that I kept on that way because the Tyrrells lived there before they went to live in Clonskeagh. I am aware of that dark September night at the corner of the Appian Way as I am of the moment I am now living, the sky grey above the trees and a sycamore leaf fluttering down from a great bough to my feet, and myself, yielding to a vague feeling of apprehension, stepping

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aside to avoid treading on it, and it was immediately after the fall of that leaf that the temptation rose again, coming up, as it were, out of my very bowels; yet the temptation was not of a woman or any part of a woman, but a desire to enter the Irish Church in the sense of identifying myself with it.

Hitherto my desire had been merely to dissociate myself from a Church which I deemed shameful, whereas I was now conscious of a desire of unity with a Church in sympathy with my religious aspiration . . . to some extent. But I had promised the Colonel not to declare myself a Protestant, meaning thereby that I would not write to the papers on the subject, nor call Dublin together to hear a lecture on the incompatibility of Literature and Dogma. But my promise to the Colonel, I said, keeps me out of St. Patrick's every Sunday. For me to be seen there every Sunday would be equivalent to a declaration of Protestantism. And to be kept out of my Cathedral is a great privation, for I should like to go there occasionally and to pray with the congregation; to pray to whom I know not, but I should like to pray.

A little later I found myself standing before a tall iron gate peering through the bars, admiring some golden tassels. Golden rod, I said, and the borders, I am sure, are blue and lobelia. A sudden scent of honey warned me that arabis was there in plenty, and I walked on thinking of a dense cushion of pure white flowers till my steps were again stayed, and this time it was by the sight of—— The tree seemed like a quince, but the quince does not bear pink and white blossoms, a bell-shapen blossom like a mallow. But neither tree nor shrub flowers at the end of August, and I walked on in a dream, awakened by another garden gate over which a syringa had flourished two months ago. Has heaven a more

delectable scent than the remembrance of a syringa in bloom? I asked, and it was on my way home from Clonskeagh that I said to myself: Now, if I go to London to see the house that Steer and Tonks have found in Swan Walk, or to Paris and view the *appartement* in the Boulevard St. Germain that Dujardin has discovered, I shall not be able to declare my Protestant faith. Why not? I asked. Why not? And the answer came quickly: for there is nobody in London or Paris interested in such questions. So that is why I hesitate to write to my friends to announce my departure from Dublin, and the source of the lie that I told John on the night he invited me to walk with him down the Pembroke Road and back by Northumberland Road over the canal bridge before going to bed. How little do we know of ourselves! I muttered, and again I walked on, this time my mind awake and myself not a little frightened, for it seemed certain that I was prompted by an unworthy motive to declare myself a Protestant. Can I accept Protestantism whole-heartedly? I asked, and I remembered John Eglinton's words: The Archbishop will certainly ask you if you can accept the divinity of our Lord. He will ask, too, if I can accept the resurrection of the body; and till I reached Ely Place I did not cease to seek in my memory for the passage in Corinthians, in which St. Paul is at pains to elucidate the doctrine of the resurrection of the body. The apostle is anxious to convince his converts and himself. He is troubled by doubts, doubts that my Archbishop does not share for reasons he has discovered, and his reasons he will lay before me fully. All will then be well. Hereupon I walked to the writing-table and wrote:

Your Grace: For the last three years, since I came to live in Ireland, my thoughts have been directed towards

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religion, and I have come to see that Christianity in its purest form is to be found in the Anglican rather than in the Church of Rome. I am anxious to become a member of your Church, and shall be glad to hear from your Grace regarding the steps I am to take.

After addressing the letter I stood for a long time admiring it and trying to collect my thoughts sufficiently to decide whether I should take the letter to his Grace's house and drop it into his box myself, or post it in the pillar. It should come to him through the post, I said, and after posting it I returned home and slept easier that night. And after breakfast my thoughts went at once to the Book, and by midday many spurious passages had been discovered—for instance, that very commonplace, reeking-of-Bishop passage: Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,—a passage so obviously needed for the founding of a Church that the policeman round the corner, if one were to bring him in, would say, Well, sir, it doesn't look much like the genuine article, do it? We'd call it fake up at the station. Yes, of course, fake—and the most blatant fake. It was necessary to have Christ's authority for an apostolic succession and the right to collect money, to lay down the law, to judge others—all the things that Christ expressly declared should not be done; and in my indignation I compared the ordinary Christians, who accept this piece of ecclesiasticism as Christ's words, to the artistic people we meet every day who admire equally Botticelli, Burne-Jones, Corot, Sir Alfred East, Turgenev, and Mrs. Humphry Ward. The common man, I said, makes

the same mess of pottage out of religion as he does out of art.

This sad thought caused me to drop into a long meditation, and I remembered, on awakening, that the passage from Matthew, the utility of which the policeman round the corner could not fail to see, had been improved upon by the Bishop who wrote about one hundred and fifty years after the Crucifixion. The need for a more explicit text than the one from Matthew had begun to be felt, and the Bishop supplied, Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained. And, so disturbed was I by the retouching of the text by ecclesiastics that I resolved to compile for my own use and benefit a list of the authentic sayings, and, calling Miss Gough, I dictated them to her, adding as a little appendix all the words that had obviously been inserted by the Fathers; for instance, Be not angry with thy brother without just cause.

Without just cause degrades Christ. These three words turn him into a reasonable and commonplace person. It will be interesting, Miss Gough, to have the Archbishop's opinion upon these texts when I go to the Palace.

She answered that it would be indeed interesting, and I began to wonder why Dr. Peacock had delayed to answer my letter; my letter was one that needed an answer by return of post. For his Grace cannot be without knowledge of the anxiety of mind that religious questions cause those who are sincerely religious, anxious at all costs to themselves to arrive at the truth. Miss Gough's explanation was that his Grace might not be at the Palace, and this seemed to me not unlikely, for we were in September and the month was a fine one. I opened my Bible, and turning to the Acts, which is probably the earliest Christian document, I read: But a certain man named Ananias, with

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Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the Apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? While it remains, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not thine own power? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. Whether Peter was ever Bishop of Rome is a matter on which ecclesiastical authorities are undecided, but there can be no doubt that he was, and is, and ever will be, Parish Priest in the county of Galway. Stephen was stoned in the streets of Jerusalem, and Paul standing by, I said, and rushed on to the story of Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. It was not, however, until Paul bade good-bye to his disciples and friends at Ephesus that he won all my admiration and instinctive sympathy. In this most beautiful farewell, one of the most moving and touching things in literature, Paul takes us to his bosom; two thousand years cannot separate us—we become one with Paul and glorify God in him.

And these noble verses are not Paul's single contribution to the Acts; he is so evident in these narratives of adventure that it is difficult to imagine how they came to be attributed to Luke. The narrative of the shipwreck and the journey to Rome could only have been written by a man of literary genius, and there are never two at the same time. The trial at Caesarea is Paul's own rendering of his defence. Of course it is, and I wondered how any one could have entertained, even for a moment, the notion that Luke made it up. How did he make it up? From hearsay? Blind men and deaf knowing nothing of the art of writing! Luke may have edited Paul's manuscripts,

and his recension may be the farewell at Ephesus, the trial at Caesarea, and the journey to Rome. But it is certain that Paul's voice, and no other voice, is heard in these narratives; and it is a voice that is always distinguishable from every other voice. We do not hear it in the Epistle to the Hebrews, nor do we hear it in the thirteenth chapter of 1st Corinthians, a chapter which I have no hesitation whatever in taking from Paul and attributing to a disciple of John's. But I do not know if any other exegetist has rejected this chapter. Many have rejected the Epistles to the Ephesians, the Philippians, the first and second Colossians, but it seems to me that I hear Paul's voice in all of these. The Archbishop will no doubt be surprised that I should admit so much. All will go well if he doesn't press upon me the Epistle to the Hebrews.

The postman's knock startled me out of my meditation, and Teresa brought me his Grace's letter on a silver salver; treasured it was for many years, lost, unfortunately, as were some of Pater's letters.

Dr. Peacock began his letter by explaining that he was staying at the seaside with his family, and there had been some delay at the Palace in forwarding my letter. He confessed to a great joy in hearing that my coming to Ireland had been the means of leading me back to Christ; and he admitted, I think, that there might be many little points which he would be able to clear up for me, but as he was not returning to Dublin for some weeks the most natural course, he said, was to send my letter to my parish priest, who would call upon me.

The words parish priest always seemed to me to savour of Rome, and the Archbishop's letter slipped from my fingers, and I sat for a long time thinking of what this Archbishop was like. His name conveyed the idea of

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a tall, formal man, and perhaps the interview would have been a very stiff and formal affair, myself and the Archbishop on either side of a mahogany table covered with papers and piles of letters held together by elastic bands. My parish priest, the Reverend Gilbert Mahaffy, had been my neighbour for a long time; the Rectory was No. 13, Ely Place, one door from the great iron gateway that divides my little cul-de-sac from Ely Place. He was known as a man of the very kindest disposition. I had often heard Gill speak of his work among the poor, of his effusive enthusiasm and energy. A rare soul, I had often said as he passed me on his charitable errands, absorbed in his thoughts, his short legs moving so quickly under the long frock-coat buttoned to the chin, that he seemed to be running. I could recall the high shoulders showing straight and pointed, the wide head shaded by the soft felt hat, the large straight nose, the cheeks and chin covered with a soft greying beard, and the kindly eyes—Eyes, I said, that always seem to be on the lookout for somebody's trouble.

Gilbert Mahaffy's appearance had appealed to me, winning me before a word had been exchanged between us; all the same, I was conscious of a little resentment. He had never called upon me; he looked the other way when we passed in the street, treating me exactly like poor Cunningham. It seemed to me that he should have called upon me when I came to Dublin first, and not waited for the Archbishop to tell him to call. However, there it was; he was coming to see me. And taking up the New Testament once more, I fell to thinking what his literary and critical qualifications were. A good man he certainly is, but from his appearance one would hardly credit him with a subtle mind; and a subtle mind seemed to be necessary . . . in my case. We are safe if we admit that

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Jesus was God and was sent by his Father into the world to atone by his death on the Cross for the sins of men. But Jesus in his own words seems to deny the enormous pretensions that the ecclesiastics would cast upon him. In Matthew he says, Why dost thou call me good? None is good but God, and no less striking words were uttered by him on the Cross: My God, why hast thou abandoned me? The Colonel had once reminded me that Jesus had said, Before Abraham was, I am, but these Orientals spoke in images, and it is easy to understand that we all were before Abraham, that is to say, before Abraham existed in the flesh. But the words, Why dost thou call me good? None is good but God, seemed to me very difficult to explain away, and the words spoken on the Cross even more so. Nor is it very clear that Paul believed in the separate Divinity of Christ. Christ will disappear in the end to be merged into his Father. A puzzling view of Christ's Divinity, I said, and sat for a long time looking into the fire, thinking how pleasant it would be if Mahaffy were here, we two sitting on either side of the fire, our Bibles on our knees.

It was the next day that my servant told me the Reverend Mr. Mahaffy had called. Retreat is now out of the question, I said. To-morrow he'll call again; or perhaps he'll wait for me to return his visit, and for me to return it will be more polite. But it is impossible to wait till to-morrow. I must talk the matter out with somebody. Why not with Sir Thornley? Only he is generally occupied with patients at this hour.

You know, I've been thinking of joining the Church of Ireland for some time.

So I have heard it said, but I thought it was one of your jokes.

One doesn't choose such subjects for joking; and I

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showed him the Archbishop's letter. Now, what is to be done? The Reverend Gilbert Mahaffy called this afternoon, and he'll call to-morrow if I don't return his visit. It will be better, I think, to call upon him this evening and get it over, only I can't think what he'll say to me. . Can you give me any idea?

He'll ask you if you adjure the errors of Rome.

He can't ask that, because I never believed in Rome. Do you think he'll ask me to say a prayer with him?

Sir Thornley began to laugh, and his laughter shocked me a little, but I did not get up to leave the room until he said:

Did the Archbishop send you an order for coals and blankets?

I wonder how you, who are a Protestant, and respect your religion—— I wonder what your co-religionists—— and without attempting to finish my sentence I walked out of the room abruptly, and opened the hall-door, but had to draw back into the hall, for Gilbert Mahaffy was coming down Hume Street, and, thinking of him in his strenuous, useful life, I came to be ashamed of the disappointment I had experienced when the Archbishop had referred my spiritual needs to him instead of undertaking them himself. No man, I said, is more likely to inspire in me the faith I am seeking. . . . After dinner I will call upon him.

My dinner was hardly tasted that evening, so perturbed was I; and I still can recall the glow behind the houses as I went towards the gateway.

Is Mr. Mahaffy at home?

Yes, sir.

Portentous words, and the study itself portentous in its simplicity. I had just time to look over the great writing-table covered with papers—all on parochial business, I

said—before he entered. He came running into the room, his eyes and his hands welcoming me.

I'm so glad to see you.

We have lived near each other for a long time, I answered, and I have often wished to know you, Mr. Mahaffy.

Yes; His Grace asked me to call. Yes-s.

In moments of great mental excitement one notices everything, and Mr. Mahaffy's manner of saying yes-s, trying to turn the word from a monosyllable to a dissyllable, and his habit of rubbing his hands after the pronunciation, struck me. And very nervously I began to explain that I had written to the Archbishop, saying that since I had come to live in Ireland——

His Grace sent me your letter—yes-s.

You see, Mr. Mahaffy, in England one has no opportunity of noticing the evil influence of the Church of Rome; it wasn't until I came here . . . It seemed to me that I had better tell him of my great discovery—the illiteracy of Rome since the Reformation. I did—without, however, interesting him very deeply. He is more interested in the theological side of the question, I said to myself, and sought for a transitional phrase, but before finding one Mr. Mahaffy mentioned Newman, and I told him that Newman could hardly write English at all, at which he showed some surprise. The Roman Church relies upon its converts, for after two or three generations of Catholicism the intelligence dies.

It was plain to me that the conversation was not altogether to his taste, and, thinking to interest him, I said:

You know, Cardinal Manning was of this opinion. He told a friend of mine that he was glad he had been brought up a Protestant.

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Did he? I didn't know that.

And, my thoughts running on ahead, I began to describe a new Utopia—a State so well ordered that no one in it was allowed to be a Papist unless he or she could prove some bodily or mental infirmity, or until he or she had attained a certain age, which put them beyond the business of the world—the age of seventy, perhaps, the earliest at which a conversion would be legal. A sort of spiritual Old Age Pension Scheme, I said; and a picture rose up before my mind of a crowd of young and old, all inferior, physically or intellectually, struggling round the door of a Roman Catholic Church, with papers in their hands, on the first Friday of every month.

It is quite possible, Mr. Moore, that there is more intelligence in Protestantism than in Catholicism; but the question before us is hardly one of literature. In the letter to His Grace I understood you to say that Christianity is to be found in its purest form in the Anglican Church. We are concerned, really, with spiritual rather than with aesthetic truths.

You are quite right. Perhaps I was wrong; but a sense of humour does not preclude sincerity, and many reasons lead one towards spiritual truth. If I introduced aesthetics into our conversation, it was because I have spoken to Catholics on this matter, and they have always, with one exception—a convert—failed to put the case as you did—that religion really has nothing to do with aesthetics.

The interview had certainly taken an unexpected turn, and an unfortunate one, and while I was thinking of something to say to Mr. Mahaffy, he asked me suddenly if he were to understand that I accepted the Divinity of our Lord?

Of course I am aware that you accept the Divinity of

our Lord Jesus Christ in a very literal sense, but is it sure that we do not mean the same thing in the end? All things tend towards God, and what is highest in Nature is nearest to God, and certainly Jesus Christ was the noblest human being in many respects that ever lived.

A cloud had come into his face, and, seeing that it was deepening, I became more sincere in the sense that I tried to get nearer to the truth.

I should like to believe as you do, to share your belief.

And you will, he said. You will be with us one of these days if you aren't with us wholly to-day, and we talked on religious subjects until it was time for me to go. Then he asked me to come again; I promised to do so in a few days, and went away asking myself if it were ever likely that I should be able to answer truthfully and say Yes, I believe in the Divinity of Christ as you do. I should have to know exactly what he meant, and it is doubtful if he would be able to tell me, for we cannot understand God, and if we cannot understand what God is, how is it that we speak of the Son of God? St. Paul himself had no conception of the Trinity. If Christ were God, equal to his Father, how is it that—what are Paul's words?—Christ will disappear in the end to be merged into his Father? It is all very puzzling.

A few days after I went again to see Mr. Mahaffy, and I remember telling him that I had been questioning myself on the subject of Christ's Divinity.

You see, Mr. Mahaffy, one doesn't know what one believes. None of us thinks alike, and no man can tell his soul to another. Is it not sufficient if I say that in my belief there is more Divinity in Christ than in any other human being?

You say in your letter to the Archbishop that you wished to join the communion of the Anglican Church, and the

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belief of that communion is not so vague as yours, Mr. Moore. We believe that Christ is the Son of God, and came into the world to redeem the world from sin, that he died on the Cross and rose three days afterwards from the dead, ascended into Heaven——

Tolstoy didn't believe in the physical resurrection, and it may be doubtful if St. Paul believed in it; yet you will not deny that Tolstoy was a Christian.

He was a Christian, no doubt, but not in the full sense of the word as we understand it.

Well, St. Paul. I take my stand upon Paul, Mr. Mahaffy. He seems to have had very little sense of the Trinity. Paul was a Unitarian. The passage in which he says that Christ will disappear in the end to be merged into his Father. . . .

We wrangled about texts for a long time, Mahaffy quoting one, I quoting another, until it seemed impolite for me to press my point further; and accepting him as an authority, I bade him good-night, asking him when I might see him again.

Three days afterwards I was again in the Rectory, and we talked for an hour together and parted on the same terms.

I shall be in to-morrow evening. Will you come to see me?

I promised I would, and all the time I felt that this evening would not end without his asking me to say a prayer with him, and the thought of the prayer haunted my mind all the time I was speaking to him, and when I rose to go the long-expected words came.

Will you say a prayer with me?

He went down upon his knees, and I repeated the Lord's Prayer after him.

I have been dreading this prayer all the week, and I

could hardly conquer my fear, and at the same time a force behind myself prompted me to you.

Let me give you a Prayer-Book, he said, and I returned home to read it absorbed in a deep emotion, for the prayer said with Mr. Mahaffy had come out of my heart, and the memory of it continued to burn, shedding a soft radiance. How happy I am! What a blessed peace this is! My difficulties have melted away, and it no longer seems to matter to me whether the world thinks me Catholic or Protestant; I am with Christ.

But the storm of life is never over until it ceases for ever, and before a week had gone by a copy of an Irish review came to me, containing a criticism of my book, *The Untilled Field*; himself a Catholic were the words that upset my mental balance, forcing me into an uncontrollable rage. Is this shame eternal? I cried. Of what use is writing? I have been writing all my life that I never had hand, act, or part——

Very little emotion robs me of words, and, with a great storm raging within my breast, I walked about the room, conscious that a great injustice was being done to me. Merely because my father was a Papist am I to remain one? Despite long protests and practice, not only this paper calls me a Catholic, but Edward, my most intimate friend, calls me one. His words are: You are a bad Catholic; but you are a Catholic; and he persists in those words, though, according to the Catholic Church, I am not one, never having acquiesced in any of its dogmas. He continues to reiterate the shameful accusation—shameful to me, at least. His mind is so stultified in superstitions that he does not remember that those who do not confess and communicate cease to belong to the Roman Church. I believe that to be the rule, and if I remind him of it his face becomes overcast. Any thought of transgression

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frightens him; but so paralysed is his mind, that he clings to the base superstition that if a little water is poured on the head of an infant in a Catholic Church the child remains a Catholic, just as a child born of black parents remains a nigger, no matter what country he is born in or the nationality he elects. Now I wonder if it be orthodox to hold that a Sacrament confers benefits on the recipient without some co-operation on the part of the recipient? I suppose that is Roman Catholic doctrine; even if the recipient protests the Sacrament overrules his objections. We live in a mad world, my masters! But I think Edward goes a step further than Catholic doctrine warrants him to do. He seems to hold that Catholic baptism confers perpetual Catholicism on the individual. I do his theology a wrong. If you aren't a Catholic, why don't you become a Protestant? he said at Tillyra. I corrected him. One doesn't become a Protestant, I said; but the correction was wasted. His theological knowledge is slight, but he knows the country—his own phrase, I know the country—and in Ireland one must be one or the other.

A light seemed to break in my mind suddenly; I remembered that the welcome the priests had given Edward VII. when he came to Ireland had not pleased the patriotic Gaelic League, and it occurred to me that I might get a nice revenge for the words himself a Catholic if I were to write to the *Irish Times* declaring that I had passed from the Church of Rome to the Church of Ireland, shocked beyond measure at the lack of patriotism of the Irish priests. Nothing will annoy them more, and in that I shall not be writing a lie. Magicians I have called them, and with good reason. Their magical powers are as great in politics as in religion, for haven't they persuaded Ireland to accept them as patriots?

I wrote for an hour, and then went out in search of Æ: it is essential to consult Æ on every matter of importance, and the matter on which I was about to consult him seemed to me of the very highest. The night was Thursday, and every Thursday night after finishing the last pages of *The Homestead*, he goes to the Hermetic Society to teach till eleven o'clock. But the rooms were not known to me, and I must have met a member of the Society who directed me to the house in Dawson Street, a great decaying building let out in rooms, traversed by dusty passages, intersected by innumerable staircases; and through this great ramshackle I wandered, losing myself again and again. The doors were numbered, but the number I sought seemed undiscoverable. At last, at the end of a short, dusty corridor, I found the number I was seeking, and on opening the door caught sight of Æ among his disciples. He was sitting at a bare table, teaching, and his disciples sat on chairs, circlewise, listening. There was a lamp on the table, and it lit up his ardent, earnest face, and some of the faces of the men and women, others were lost in shadows. He bade me welcome, and continued to teach as if I had not been there. He even appealed to me on one occasion, but the subject was foreign to me, and it was impossible to detach my thoughts from the business on which I had come to speak to him. It seemed as if the disciples would never leave. The last stragglers clung about him, and I wondered why he did not send them away; but Æ never tries to rid himself of anybody, not even the most importunate. At last the door closed, and I was free to tell him that it was impossible for me to bear with this constantly recurring imputation of Catholicism any longer.

I have written a letter, I said, which should bring it to an end and for ever. But before publishing it I should

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like to show it to you; it may contain things of which you would not approve. The pages were spread upon the table, and Æ began to suggest emendations. The phrases I had written would wound many people, and Æ is instinctively against wounding anybody. But his emendations seemed to me to destroy the character of my letter, and I said:

Æ, I can't accept your alterations. It has come to me to write this letter. You see, I am speaking out of a profound conviction.

Then, my dear Moore, if you feel the necessity of speech as much as that, and the conviction is within you, it is not for me to advise you. You have been advised already.

VALE

I

IT was about the time of the publication of my letter to the *Irish Times*, mentioned in the last page of *Salve*, that I received from the French Consul an invitation to dinner to meet the Secretary of the Consulate, M. Orange, a young man, a poet, *au moins il a publié un volume de vers chez Lemerre*. The Méaulles, Monsieur et Madame, are among my pleasantest memories of Dublin, and on the night in question, when it was time to bid our host and hostess good-night, I proposed to Orange that we should walk back to Dublin together, thinking that perhaps he might like to talk French poetry with me. As we passed through the garden-gate he muttered: *Voilà une soirée bien passée*. He was quite right; we had passed a pleasant evening in pleasant company. But when he repeated the same words at the same place the next time we dined at the Méaulles', I began to read into them a hidden meaning: that we were nearer our graves than we had been earlier in the afternoon; and when he repeated the same words some weeks afterwards, and in the same place, they took on still another meaning; that we being men of letters would have done better had we stayed at home reading books under our lamps. And as we strode along together I resolved that I would reacquire the habit of reading, not remembering that the temptation is always by the talker to lay his books aside and go out to look up a friend, especially in Dublin, where casual visiting is our single pleasure.

And Orange's criticism of life leaving me no peace, I begged Teresa one evening, after she had removed the

cloth, to tell whosoever called that I was not at home; and when she had put my coffee on the table I said: The moment has come for me to pick out a book from the shelves. But which? I knew that a large volume containing Shakespeare's plays stood on the third shelf and that I should find in it a well of pure literature undefiled. Alarums, excursions, and the blowing of trumpets over the field of Agincourt, Kings in full armour rushing about crying for *destriers*—the French word for what we would call a cob, compact and thick-set. He charges like a *destrier* in the Henrys, and after the charge retires to a hawthorn-tree and neighs a melodious plaint of graves and worms and epitaphs. But Balzac appealed to me for a moment and my eyes ran through the titles of the edition printed in 1855, a prize brought back from Paris some months ago, but never looked into; treated, alas! like a wife, a sort of matrimonial edition, and only known to me by a long attempt to read *César Birotteau*, an adventure that had stopped half-way, so cumbersome was the burly Tourainean in this story, so slow was he to rise, like a cart-horse asleep in the middle of the road, too heavy to struggle to his hooves in less than a hundred pages, but getting away at last. His ends are no doubt fine and thunderous. All the same, Turgenev didn't believe in him, and glancing down a line of small volumes I said: Turgenev is neither cob nor dray, but an Arab carrying in every story a lady as romantic as one of Chopin's ballads, especially the third, and I thought of the celebrated phrase. Maupassant detained me for a moment and then seemed to me too much like an intrigue with a housemaid. Goncourt? The fashion of yesterday and to-day older than Herodotus. Pater? His Epicurean? A tide of honeyed words preached by a divine from an ivory pulpit, well worth re-reading, but——

And I returned to my chair frightened, feeling that if I did not learn to read my life would become a burden to me and to others. Everybody will fly from me, my friends will melt away. Edward wouldn't open to me the other night, he preferred his book to my talk, and he continues to struggle through Ruskin, and John Eglinton toils at *Don Quixote*. Those fellows can live alone, and Æ . . . ah, well, Æ! And then my thoughts left me. I read the newspaper, and at a quarter to eleven lit my candle, hoping that in bed some interesting book would come to mind. But when Teresa had removed the cloth the next night and the moment for choosing had come again, I was unable to conquer a mysterious reluctance. It seemed pleasanter to think about Stevenson than to read him, and of all, to remember that I had once called him a young man walking in the Burlington Arcade, the best-dressed young man that ever walked in the Burlington Arcade, but little else. We writers know how to get the knife under the other fellow's ribs. I raised my head to listen: footsteps sounded in the street, and it seemed as if somebody was coming to see me. . . . The moments grew tense and relaxed, and when the footsteps of the wanderer died away in the distance of Hume Street, I sat limp and miserable, afraid to look round lest somebody should be crouching in the corner of the distant room.

But I had come home to read, and read I must, and it seemed to me that what was needed was some long work that would leave a definite impression upon the mind. There was *Tom Jones*; professors of literature declare it to be England's finest novel, but I remembered it merely as a very empty work written in a breezy manner; and there was Richardson whom I had not read at all; *Clarissa Harlowe* in how many volumes of letters? And after

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these writers came Miss Burney, and the name of one of her books floated through my mind, the name of some woman, Emily, Julia—no. There was Sterne's *Sentimental Journey* still unread, and some one had given me a copy saying that no one would ever appreciate Sterne more than I. . . . But my cigar was burning so fragrantly that Sterne was once again postponed, and I lay back in the armchair, dozing in the warmth that a huge lump of coal sent out from the grate, and, my brain stupefied in the heat, I said to myself: Though I may have lost the habit of reading, I have acquired, perhaps more than any other human being, another habit, the habit of thinking. I love my own thoughts; and the past is a wonderful mirror in which I spend hours watching people and places I have known; dim, shadowy and far away they seem, and pathetic are the faces, and still more pathetic is the way everybody follows his little prejudices; however unreasonable they may be we must follow them. The Colonel said the other day that he could accept all that his Church teaches; Transubstantiation, the Immaculate Conception, even the Pope's indulgences did not trouble him; he found it difficult, however, to believe in the immortality of his soul. If Death deprives me of my senses of feeling and seeing, of my intellect, of everything that is me, how can it be said that I exist? he asked, shielding his face with his hand from the fire. How can it be said that I, the personality connoted by the pronoun, exist? We are all Agnostics at heart. And then it seemed to me that the Colonel and I were engaged in some argument, not about the immortality of the soul, but about a letter that I had written to the *Irish Times* in which he declared that I had libelled him, and then my father seemed to have come back to this world again, and,

picking up the letter about which my brother and I were disputing, he declared that he could detect no libel in it but a great many misspellings and mistakes in grammar, and that I must go back to Oscott at once. I was there in a trice, face to face with the headmaster, no other than Sir Thomas More, who was deeply shocked that any descendant of his should use the language as badly as I had done in the bundle of paper which he held in his hand. . . .

The thought of undergoing further school-days awoke me suddenly, and at the same moment the door opened. Good Heavens! who is it? What is it?

It was only Teresa bringing in glasses and decanters, and when I had recovered my senses sufficiently I began to think of the two portraits of Sir Thomas More brought from Ashbrook. The heavy monkish jowl and the cocked hat had often awakened a frightened antipathy in me, setting me thinking that there must be a fine strain of Protestant blood flowing in the Moores. But which was the one who discovered himself to be a Protestant? I moved to the writing-table and wrote asking the Colonel for his name, and a few days after Teresa handed me an envelope on which I recognised my brother's handwriting, and making at once for an armchair, I read that Sir Thomas More had married twice, begetting a son and three daughters by his first wife. These had remained Papist, and it was not till the second generation that the change came. John had two sons, both called Thomas. The elder founded the line of Barnborough, now extinct; but the younger Thomas discovered himself to be a Protestant, and the Colonel reminded me that if I decided to throw over Sir Thomas More I should also have to throw over the honour of having a Protestant clergyman in the family.

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The clergyman had three sons, of whom little is known except their names. Two of them went to live in Essex; the third, another Thomas, disappeared into Mayo, it is said.

This tradition, the Colonel wrote, finds support in the fact that there was a Thomas More in Mayo in the seventeenth century who had a son called George, and this George took part in the Williamite wars in Ireland, and it appears that he must have conducted himself well at the Battle of the Boyne, for King William bestowed on him the title of Vice-Admiral of Connaught, a title which he held twice, a considerable title still, for its present holder is Lord Lucan. He was buried near Straid Abbey in Mayo, with the inscription upon his tomb: THIS IS THE BURIAL PLACE OF CAPTAIN GEORGE MORE AND HIS DESCENDANTS, 1723. His son obtained a lease of some property known as Legaphouca, and from this deed we learn that he had two sons, George and John, and that John married Miss Jane Lynch Athy of Renvyle, a Catholic, and brought her to live with him at Ashbrook. Of this marriage there were two sons; one died, and the surviving son, George, seeing that the family fortunes were dwindling, sailed away to Spain and became a Catholic.

But why doesn't he tell me our great-grandfather's reasons for preferring Rome to Canterbury? And taking a cigar out of the box, I lay back in my armchair, and whilst watching the smoke ascend into the crystals of the chandelier, tarnishing them and diverting my thoughts from my great-grandfather, I remembered that the whole chandelier must soon be taken to pieces and cleaned, and that on the night of our quarrel, or rather the following morning, the Colonel had told me that our great-grandfather married a Miss Kilkelly, a Spaniard despite her name, if a hundred years of Spain can turn a Milesian back into a

Spaniard. Wild Geese these Kilkellys were, fled from Ireland after the siege of Limerick—a handsome woman in a green silk dress, heavily flounced, her hands on the keys of a spinet, the kind of woman who would tempt a man to become a Catholic, a merchant interested above all in his business and only faintly in religious questions. It was she that did it. And he felt no repugnance in being bedded with a Papist . . . strange.

A little later another explanation emerged as a wreath of smoke curled upwards into the chandelier. My great-grandfather had changed his religion before setting out for Spain, knowing well that as a Protestant he could not trade in a country where the Inquisition was still a going concern. He became a Catholic as a precautionary measure, I said, and wrote that very night to the Colonel asking for the date of our grandfather's conversion. The reply to this question came a few days afterwards. It was not mentioned in any family paper, but of one thing he was sure, sexual reasons did not determine it, for no religious difficulty in connection with his marriage had arisen. You must remember, he wrote, that our great-grandfather's mother was a Catholic, and it was probably the mother's influence.

How little these Papists understand religion, I said, and walked about the room muttering. He could not very well ask me to picture the great merchant retiring to his room after business hours to read the Fathers, so he concludes that it was his mother's influence that effected the conversion. Ary Scheffer's picture of St. Augustine and Monica rose up before my eyes, and I vowed that it was kelp that had turned my great-grandfather into a Papist. Much better it should have been kelp than Kempis, I said; much better for me. And it amused me to think of the ships laden with seaweed coming round the Bay of Biscay

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from the Arran Islands to my great-grandfather in Alicante, and the burnt kelp filling the iron chest (still at Moore Hall), and quickly, with ducats, and my great-grandfather returning to Ireland, a sort of mercantile pirate of the Spanish Main. The Colonel's letter told me that it was with two hundred and fifty thousand pounds he returned, on the lookout for investments for his money, and for a site whereon to build a fine Georgian house he had in mind. He would have built it at Ashbrook if there had been a prospect, but there being none, he bought Muckloon, a pleasant green hill overlooking Lough Carra; and the Colonel mentioned that our great-grandfather used to sit on the steps of Moore Hall, his eyes fixed on the lake. I have travelled far, he is reported to have said, but have seen nothing so beautiful as Lough Carra. And he is reported truly, for such simple words are not invented. The phrase evokes a picture: A morning in early May, and an elderly man sitting, his eyes fixed on a lake set among low shores, still as a mirror—a mirror on which somebody has breathed—an elderly man in a wig and a scarlet coat. It is thus that he is apparelled in the portrait that hangs in the dining-room, painted when and by whom there is no record. In it he is a man of thirty, and when he was thirty he was in Alicante. It is pleasant to have a portrait of one's ancestor in a wig, and in a vermilion coat with gold lace and buttons, white lace at the collar and cuffs—probably a Spanish coat of the period. The face is long, sheep-like, and distinguished—the true Moore face as it has come down to us. My brother Augustus was the living image of his great-grandfather—the same long face, the same long, delicately shaped nose, without, however, the gay eyes, cloudless as a child's. No face ever told the tale of a happy life more plainly, nor could it be else, everything having succeeded with him. He seemed to

have run misfortune clean out of sight, but he had made a little too much running, and was overtaken in the last few years. On awakening one morning he asked his valet why he had not opened the shutters. The servant answered that he had opened them. But the room is dark. No, sir; the room is quite light. Then I am blind! he said.

Who has heard of a more horrible discovery than to have gone blind in one's sleep? Is it to be wondered that his courage died, and that the rest of his life was lived between priest and doctor, in terror of death? for he had become a Catholic. Nor were blindness and fear of death all his misfortunes. His wife wearied of Moore Hall, and her sons bored her. Peter was witless; John, the first President of the Irish Republic, was arrested at Athlone and driven along the roads with other rebels to Castlebar. He died in prison. George, the eldest son, a mild, visionary youth, was interested in literature, and was admired and made much of at Holland House, so the Colonel tells me. And without wife or child the last years of the blind man at Moore Hall must have been very sad and lonely. One room was the same as another to him, and with the disappearance of the lake his thoughts returned to Ashbrook, and the little Protestant cemetery near Straid Abbey. He was the last who thought of Ashbrook with affection. My father did not seem to like to speak of the place; he only went there to collect rents, and the same unsentimental errand took me to Ashbrook when I returned from Paris in 1880. Tom Rutledge and I had driven through Mayo, visiting all my estates, trying to come to terms with the tenants, and at Ashbrook a crowd had followed the car up a boreen, babbling of the disastrous year they had been through: the potato crop had been a failure; there was no diet in them.

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The phrase caught on my ear, and I remembered well the two-storied house standing on a bare hillside. The woods had been felled long ago, all except a few ash-trees left standing in the corner of the field to shelter the cattle from the wind, and the house, having been inhabited by peasants for a long time, presented a sad degradation, a sagging roof, and windows so black that I did not dare to think of the staircase leading to the drawing-room, in which my great-grandmother had stitched that pretty piece of tapestry which is now in the Kensington Museum. Dunne, my tenant, a heavy, surly fellow, whose manners were not engaging (we heard afterwards he was the leader of a notable conspiracy against us), asked us to step inside, but fearing to meet with chickens in the parlour that perhaps still had the ancient paper on its walls, I pleaded that the day was drawing to a close, and asked him if he would be kind enough to take me to my great-grandfather's grave. He turned aside, and the peasants answering for him said:

Sure we will, your honour.

So this is the brook, I thought to myself, and watched the water trickle through masses of weeds and rushes. We crossed some fields and came to a ruined chapel, and my peasant pointed to an incised stone let into the wall, the loneliest grave it seemed to me in all the world; and drowsing in my armchair, unable to read, the sadness that I had experienced returned to me, and I felt and saw as I had done thirty years before. I had thought then of the poor old man who had built Moore Hall deciding at last that his ashes were to be carried to Ashbrook. But the Colonel, I said, mentions Straid Abbey as the burial-place of Captain George Moore and his descendants, and the little ruined chapel that was shown to me can't be Straid Abbey.

A few days afterwards another letter came from the Colonel replying to my reproaches that his answers to my questions were vague and insufficient, and from this letter I learnt that my great-grandfather's misfortunes did not cease with his death. He had left instructions in his will that he wished to be buried with his ancestors in the little Protestant cemetery near Straid Abbey. The Colonel had discovered it half a mile down the road, after having searched Straid Abbey vainly for the tomb of Captain George Moore, and his letter told me how he had had some difficulty in pushing his way through a mass of briars and hemlocks and in finding the inscription among the ruins of the church; but he had found it.

So it was there that my great-grandfather had wished to be buried, but he had been buried at Ashbrook in a Catholic chapel. By mistake, the Colonel says in his letter. By mistake! I cried. Any breach of faith were better than that he should be laid with his Protestant forbears. The Irish Spaniard, Catholic, back, belly, and sides, would not have hesitated to ignore her husband's instructions. She must have come from London, for George the historian, an Agnostic like his master Gibbon, would have buried his father as the will directed, if he had not been overcome by his mother, who, of course, would like to conceal the fact that she had married a man of such certain Protestantism that at the last he had chosen to be buried in a Protestant cemetery. I should like to know who was at this funeral, and if the historian came over from London to attend it or remained gadding about Holland House, or courting Louisa Browne, whom he afterwards married in spite of the fact that it was her uncle or her brother who secured the conviction of John Moore, the historian's brother. That marriage would have added another grief to the old merchant's many griefs.

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A portrait of Louisa hangs in the dining-room, and she appears in it as a voluptuous young woman wrapped in gauze, and by her hangs the portrait of her uncle, Lord Altamont, a copy of the portrait by Reynolds in Westport House. Both are indifferent works, but there is a good picture in the dining-room at Moore Hall, a portrait of my grandfather painted in 1836, certainly not earlier, and therefore not a Raeburn. Nor is it a Catterson Smith, who was painting at that time in Dublin, for his thick, heavy touch is nowhere visible in grandfather's portrait. The drawing is sure, almost unconscious, revealing an old man with white hair growing scantily about a high forehead, and though no books are in the background, we divine a library and a life sheltered from every misfortune. Who would have painted the portrait? Wilkie, perhaps. He was painting about that time. But there are few life-sized portraits by Wilkie, and in none that I have seen is the drawing so thoughtful, nor does he show much interest in character except in his portrait. He seems to have said in it all that my grandfather tells us about himself in his preface to the *French Revolution*. A very remarkable portrait, no doubt, and for a long time I sat struggling with an idea that would not come into a phrase: that the picture and the preface might be compared to the music and the words, opera and libretto, something like that. But it would not come, and I got up and took the preface out of the drawer.

PREFACE TO MY HISTORICAL MEMOIRS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, TO BE PUBLISHED AFTER MY DEATH.

August 20, 1837.

I, this day, complete my sixty-fourth year. I have for some time been engaged in a history of the *French Revolu-*

tion. I early in life began collecting books on this subject, and they now fill up an entire side of my very pretty library in this beautiful place. They are most of them bad in style, and worse in spirit and sentiment. There are few of them which I could endure reading were it not for the task I have laid down for myself. This task has the effect of giving interest to the most wretched productions. Any book which offers me a choice of a new fact, or the solution of any difficulty attached to old facts, interests me, and I find amusement in examining it. Amusement and the banishment of what the French call *ennui* are my principal objects. Beautiful as this place is, and much as I love it, I confess I have not always been able to exclude *ennui* from its precincts. There are hours in which I have not been able to keep it away; general vague reading, without any specific object, afforded me no protection against it, but since I have sat down to my task I scarcely have known what it is. I have a rough copy carried on nearly to the present time. To every written page I have left a blank one, in which I put down any new facts or reflections or news. I wish to go on for some time longer in this manner. But my age, as mentioned at the head of this preface, admonishes me there is no time to be lost if I wish the public ever to have an insight into my history. My rough copy with alternate blank pages it is impossible for any one to make anything of, and it is not till after my death I wish my history to appear, not in the form in which, my rough copy exhibits it.

I have several times published, but never with any success, so that I am tired of publication in my lifetime. Besides, as I foresee my history will be pretty voluminous, I do not like the trouble of superintending the proofs. As I am a man of fortune, I leave by my will five hundred

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pounds to defray the expenses of publication. As the publication is in this manner ordered and appointed by me in my testamentary deposition, no one who survives me will be answerable for anything it contains. I foresee many things I say will give offence, but my objects are truth and my country. As amusement was my great object in undertaking this task, it may be said I have already gained my end in never knowing *ennui* since I began it. But having written a history of the French Revolution, impregnated with all the feelings and sentiments of an Englishman, and written in a style, I hope, purely and thoroughly English, I am ambitious it should be read after me. I have had no celebrity in my life. But a prospect of this posthumous fame pleases me at this moment. I may say with Erasmus: *Illud certe præsagio, de meis lucubrationibus, qualescumque sunt, candidius judicaturam posteritatem*, though I cannot add with him: *Tametsi nec de meo seculo queri possum*. Having missed the applause, and even notice, of my age, I ought, perhaps, to be indifferent about the opinions of those that follow; their applause, should I ever gain it, will not reach me when the grave has closed over me. This is true; but we are so made that while we are living we think with pleasure that we shall not be forgotten after our deaths. The nature of this feeling is beautifully expressed by Fielding in a passage which Gibbon had transcribed in the account of his own life. What adds to my wish that my history should be read after my death is that I am convinced no account of the great event of the French Revolution in all its parts will be fair and impartial coming from a Frenchman, none certainly will do justice to my country. I am anxious to have the merits of the Duke of Wellington duly appreciated as having done more in war than any captain that ever existed. He entered on

the contest with more disadvantages on his side, as will be explained in the history. He had greater difficulties to encounter, and arrived at more glorious results. Though not a Frenchman, I am perfectly acquainted with the French language, and there are few Frenchmen better informed with respect to the history, literature, and what are called the statistics of France than I am, so that I conceive myself perfectly well qualified, as much as any Frenchman, for the task I have undertaken. In this improved copy which I am now transcribing, I break the history into chapters, with a view to the grouping of the facts of which it consists. It is this which I call grouping that distinguishes the task of the historian from that of the annotist, and there is no point of greater importance in a history than the manner in which this grouping is executed. The deficiencies of some celebrated historians in this particular may be noticed. . . .

How abruptly it breaks off! Some pages must have been mislaid! and I sought among the litter in the drawer, and finding none, returned to my armchair full of regret that grandfather had not written a biography instead of a history, for such sincerity, such simplicity, such humility, are qualities that are rarely met with except in masterpieces. Some writers, it is true, have adopted humility as a literary artifice, but grandfather is not aware that he is humble; his prose dreams and unfolds like clouds going by. In speaking of Moore Hall I might have said that it stood on a pleasant green hill, with woods following the winding lake, and attributed the melancholy of the people to their mountains, but my grandfather merely says, In this beautiful place, and the reader's imagination is free to remember the place that has seemed to him the most beautiful. Grandfather is able to accept his own failure without attributing it to

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circumstances, writing that if his history should gain the applause of those that come after him, it would not matter to him, the grave having closed over him. But we are so made that while we live we think with pleasure that we shall not be forgotten after our death. This feeling, he adds modestly, has been beautifully transcribed in Gibbon's account of his own life. For his modesty and for many other reasons I love my grandfather, and like to think of his life flowing on uneventfully for three or four more years in the pretty library, and then his ashes being carried to Kiltoombe, where the applause of the world can never reach him. . . . But by what right do I publish his preface without his history, perhaps perturbing his rest, for we are not sure that the dead cannot hear us. The Colonel, who has inherited his grandfather's taste for history, should edit the French Revolution. He began reading it, and finding it entertaining, he gave me the preface, remarking that our grandfather had managed to escape notice even in his own house, which was indeed the case. Our mother used to say that when his wife opened the door of his library to consult him, or to make pretence of consulting him regarding the management of his property, he would answer, My dear Louisa, all that you do is right, and on these words the old man would drop back into his meditations.

One's first memory is generally of one's mother, but my grandmother was the first human being that came into my consciousness, a crumpled lady of sixty-five, who introduced me to gingerbread nuts, which, however, she did not allow me to eat. And this incident may have impressed her upon my mind; but now I come to think of it my second memory is of her. She fell one day as she was coming downstairs, and I remember William Mullowney and Joseph Applely carrying her to her room,

and from that day onward she lived in two rooms in the charge of a nurse, carried out on fine days in a sort of sedan chair. And not only my first and second memories, but my third is of her. I remember my father sitting at a small table writing letters by the bed on which his mother lay. He never spoke of her afterwards. And to me it seems strange not to speak of those we love, but that was my father's way. He never spoke of his mother or his brother Augustus, whom he loved next to his mother, and when I asked him about what books my grandfather had written, he answered, Some histories, leaving me in doubt if he had ever read one of them. But he must have looked into the huge manuscript, for five hundred pound were left for its publication, and he should have edited it. But my father did not appreciate the old gentleman who wrote histories in the room overlooking the lake; he liked his mother, and all the charming letters that he wrote from school were sent to her, and it was to her, and not to his father, that he sent his Latin and English verses, for between sixteen and seventeen he seems to have had literary ambitions. But as soon as he went to Cambridge he became interested in horses, hounds, and a lady whom he met at Bath. All this the Colonel will write excellently well in his life of our father, for he seems to understand our father's character, though he hardly knew him, and shows a surprising appreciation of the antagonism which arose between mother and son as soon as the son had left school. Our father had inherited his character from her (perhaps that is why he loved her), an obstinate, impetuous character, and he had also inherited from her a taste for letter-writing which followed him through life to the very end, and the letters that mother and son exchanged about the debts the son incurred at Cambridge and about the lady

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that he wished to marry are very violent, and every quarrel was followed by a violent reconciliation. A time of great storm and stress rolled on until he felt that another quarrel with his mother would be more than he could bear, so he went away to Russia, journeying through the Caucasus, getting to Asia Minor, how, I know not, meditating on the nothingness of things and on suicide as a respite from the torture of existence. His diary breaks off suddenly, to be taken up again two years after; all we know of these two years is that they were spent in the company of a man and his wife . . . no doubt the lady he met in Bath, who married soon after my father's flight, and travelled with her husband in the East.

The gentlemen of 1830 all had Byronic adventures, I said, and fell to thinking of the illegitimate daughter that was born to him. My mother told my sister that she had seen the lady; my father had pointed her out, saying, She is my daughter. She married and died childless, an old woman, not very long ago, and it seems a pity, and rather harsh, that we should never have met, for it is quite probable that I might have liked her better than my legitimate relation. There can be no doubt that we should have been great friends, and I pondered the charm of an illegitimate relation, especially a sister, and my father whom I did not recognise in the avowal he is reported to have made to his wife. A reticent man he was, especially reticent about the dead, loquacious only about his journey to the East. . . . It was probably the part of his life that was most real to him.

After dinner Joseph Applely always brought up tea to the summer-room, and my father drank a large cup sitting by a round rose-wood table, on which stood a Moderator lamp; and that he did not eat bread and butter or cake with his tea never ceased altogether to surprise me. After

tea my mother read a novel in an armchair, and as soon as my toys ceased to interest me I clambered on my father's knee and begged him to tell me stories about the desert and the oases where the caravan had rested on its journey from Palestine to Egypt. My father had been obliged to go to Egypt to get permission to measure the Dead Sea and to survey the coasts, and I listened round-eyed to the tale of how the guides, discovering that the Christian dogs were chalking out the way along the passages inside the Pyramid, threatened to extinguish the torches. His voyage down the Nile was a great delight to me, and between the age of six and seven I was quite familiar with the Blue Nile and the White Nile, and had many times mourned the death of a monkey. The poor little fellow tumbled out of the tree, and putting his hand to his side looked up so plaintively that my father declared that for nothing in the world would he shoot another monkey. The story that I liked best was the bringing of the boat from Joppa on the backs of mules to the Dead Sea, and not satisfied with knowing the story myself, I wished everybody else to hear it, and very often embarrassed my father by insisting that he should tell his visitors that the mules could only totter a few hundred yards, so heavy was the boat, and then had to be changed, and that he had let down eighteen hundred feet of line without touching bottom, the water being so dense that the lead would not sink any farther. And I took care that he should not skip the account of the storm that had arisen and the great fright of the Arabs at the waves; or the explanation that on any other sea except the Dead Sea the boat would certainly have been wrecked. But the best story of all was of a man whom he met walking about some world-renowned ruins with a hammer in his hand. Standing before a statue he would say, You've

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had that nose on your face for many thousand years, in one second you'll have it no longer. Whack! and away went the nose. No sooner had he finished the tale than he had perforce to tell the story of the merchant who used to go out at nightfall to seek European travellers, and if he saw one who looked as if he had money to spend, he would approach him and whisper in his ear that if he came up a by-street with him he would show him a real Khorassan blade. The celebrated smithies of Damascus had been removed to Khorassan, and the Khorassan blades were being imitated for the European market, and one day the merchant related that he was no longer put to the expense of having new ones made. He had agents in Paris and in London, and whenever these imitation swords came into the market they were purchased for small sums and sent out again to be sold after nightfall for large prices. If you can let me have one of these blades, my father answered, I should like to take it home. No, said the crafty Persian, I have none left, but I have a real Khorassan blade which I should very much like to sell you.

Khorassan or imitation I know not, but many swords, scimitars, and daggers were brought back, and Arab bridles looking like instruments of torture; and these were kept in a great press in my nursery, which I was forbidden to open. But a child cannot be gainsaid on his birthday, and my dearest wish was gratified when I was dressed as a Turk, and rode about the estate flourishing a Khorassan blade above the head of my pony. The success of the ride encouraged me to pursue my inquiries into Eastern costumes and customs, and my father's diaries were examined—not the text, that was too difficult for a child, but the camels with which the text was embellished. His eyes were keen, and with a lead pencil, hard and

sharp enough to have won all Ruskin's admiration, he followed the long, shaggy, birdlike necks, the tufted and callous hides, and the mobile lips of these bored ruminants, the nonconformists of the four-footed world. The Arab horse never seems to have once tempted his pencil; and it is difficult to find a reason, for he must have had some wonderful horses. He used to tell me of a journey from Jerusalem to Jeddo in a single day; the horse was very tired at the end of it, but he pricked up his ears and began to trot as soon as he caught sight of the town.

The only portrait of a horse that he ever attempted was a large water-colour of Anonymous—a very painstaking piece of work, of which he was a little ashamed, I think, preferring to turn the conversation from the drawing to the race itself. The horse was going very well when he turned a shoe. I wanted him to say that the horse would have won had it not been for the accident, but I could not get him to say that, and remember going to Joseph Applely, a taciturn, clandestine little man whom there is no necessity to describe here, for he is described in *Esther Waters* under the name of John Randal, to find out the truth—whether Anonymous would have won the Liverpool if he had not turned a shoe. He had done some riding himself, and was disposed to be critical, and he thought—well, it is difficult to remember exactly his criticism of my father's riding, for he had a habit of dropping his voice and muttering to himself in his shirt-collar, mumbling and turning suddenly to his press, that wonderful press in which all things could be found. It was out of that press that *Esther Waters* came, out of the stable-yard and out of my own heart.

Oscott College had demonstrated to the satisfaction of my unhappy parent that it was impossible to teach me to write a clean, intelligible letter, and in despair he allowed

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me to apply myself to the study of life. At Moore Hall there was no life except the life of the stable-yard, and to it I went with the same appetite with which I went to the life of the studio afterwards; if I had remained at Moore Hall I certainly should have ridden many steeplechases, and perhaps succeeded in doing what my father had failed to do. A pretty indulgence it would be for me now, sitting here, surrounded by Impressionist pictures, to look back upon the day at Liverpool when the flag fell and we raced for the bit of hard ground, numbers of us coming down at the first fence, myself, however, escaping a fall, and then away off into the country . . . three miles, over how many fences? And then the jump into the race-course and the three-quarters of a mile over hurdles. A pretty memory all that long way would have been for a man who has written a line of books, and I should certainly have had some such memory to play with if my father could have restrained himself from asking the electors of Mayo to send him to Parliament to ride for Repeal of the Union. They answered that they would; the horses were sold, and my dream of doing on Slievecarn what my father had hoped to do on Anonymus died in South Kensington, where we had taken a small house at the corner of Alfred Place, opposite South Kensington Station, a pleasant suburb then, thinly populated.

The Exhibition Road was building, and it was at the corner of Prince's Gardens that we met Jim Browne, the painter of the *Crucifixion* that hangs in Carnacun Chapel, in the roof high above the altar. I can remember him painting in the breakfast-room, and Tom Kelly coming to stand for the figure of Christ. The angels on either side of the cross Jim had painted no doubt out of his head; I had often wondered how he had been able to paint them, and the great picture that my father used to describe to

me in the summer-room, the great picture entitled the *Death of an Indian Chief*, a tribe of Indians reining up their horses at the edge of the precipice over which the horse bearing the dead chieftain springs madly into space. The day we met him in the Exhibition Road Jim told my father that he and his sisters were living in Prince's Gardens; he invited us to come and see his pictures on the following Sunday, and during the intervening days I could neither think nor speak of anything but Jim Browne, asking my father all the while why Jim was not the greatest painter in the world since he had painted a tribe of Indians; how many pictures? fifty, sixty, a hundred? He did not think they were so many. Twenty, thirty, forty? And if he could paint so many, why will not the Academy hang his pictures? Are the pictures he paints now not as good as the *Death of an Indian Chief*? My father suggested that Jim did not finish his pictures sufficiently for the Academy, and tried to explain to me that Jim's drawing was defective. But it was difficult for me then to understand that a man might paint a tribe of Indians reining up their horses at the edge of a precipice and yet not be able to draw, and in bed at night I lay awake thinking, waiting for the day to come.

Father, where is Prince's Gardens? Is it the first turning or the second? Do you think you will be able to persuade Jim Browne to use models? And if he does, will the Academy accept his picture in May?

II

Myself, an elderly man, lying in an armchair listening to the fire, is a far better symbol of reverie than the young girl that a painter would place on a stone bench under sunlit trees; myself trying to remember if it were

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on our way back from Prince's Gardens or a few days afterwards that I begged money from my father to buy drawing materials, remembering everything but the dates—that a pencil was never out of my hand, and that as soon as family criticism was exhausted, professional criticism was called in. Jim was invited to dinner. But a bad cold kept me in bed, terrified lest my drawings should be forgotten. As he descended the staircase voices reached me, and when the front-door closed I listened, expecting somebody to come up to tell me what Jim had said. But nobody came, and when I went shyly to my mother next morning her news was bad; after dinner my sketches had been shown to him, but he did not seem to think much of them, and on my pressing my mother to tell me more I dragged the truth from her that he considered girls riding bicycles showing a great deal of stocking a low form of art.

He only likes Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Rubens, my father said, and he invited me to come to the National Gallery, and I followed him from masterpiece to masterpiece, humble and contrite, but resolute in my persuasions that he must come with me to Drury Lane and buy some plaster casts. He seemed to look upon the money thus expended as wasted, and when he came to the bedroom that I had converted into a studio he glanced round the walls shocked at my crude attempts to draw the Venus de Milo, the Discobolus, and some busts. He did not refuse to send me to the Kensington School of Art, but he sent my brother with me, and this jarred a little, for I looked upon my wish to learn drawing as a thing peculiar to myself, and my brother was so subaltern to me and seemed so utterly unlikely to understand a work of art that I looked pityingly over his shoulder until one day the thought glided into my mind that his drawing was as

good as mine, if not better. And if that were so, what hope was there for me to become an artist, an exhibitor in the Royal Academy? an exhibitor of pictures like Jim's Julius Cæsar overturning the altars of the Druids? For even if I did learn to draw and to stipple, it did not seem to me that I should ever be able to imagine figures in all positions as Jim did, and I despaired.

Youth is a very unhappy time, Art and sex driving us mad, and our parents looking upon us with stupid unconscious eyes. My father must have been ashamed of his queer, erratic son, and could have entertained little hope that eventually I would drift into a respectable and commonplace end. We all want our children to be respectable, though we may not wish to be respectable ourselves, and as he walked to the House of Commons, a short, thick-set man with a long, determined mouth set in a fixed expression, his hands moving in little gestures to his thoughts, he must have often asked himself what new caprice would awaken in me. Would I tell him that I had decided to take up literature or music as a profession? There was no knowing which would be my next choice, and either was equally ridiculous, for in me at that time there was as little idea of a tune as there was of a sentence. It was impossible for me to grasp the different parts of speech or the use of the full-stop, to say nothing of the erudite colon. As he turned me over in his mind he must have remembered his own brilliant school-days, coming sadly to the conclusion that I must go into the Army, if he could get me into the Army, that very sympathetic asylum for booby sons. So that our soldiers may not be altogether too booby, the War Office has decreed a certain amount of ordinary spelling and arithmetic and history to be essential, and to get such as I through examinations there are specialists. Somebody must have

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exalted Jurles above all men, for my father came home one evening with the news that Jurles had pushed men through who other tutors had said would never be able to pass any examination, and would never get their livings except with the labour of their hands. The record of this thaumaturgist was seventeen hundred and fifty-three, and my father reflected that if there were miracles that even Jurles could not perform, he would at least redeem Alfred Place from the annoyance of seeing me trick-riding on a bicycle up and down the street. And Jurles would also save me from the Egertons, and daughters of a small tradesman living in Hammersmith, whither some other wastrels and myself were wont to go to sup on Sundays. Alma and Kate were on the stage, and photographs of Alma in tights and Kate in shortskirts were left about the house, and disgraceful letters turned up in the blotting-book in the drawing-room; he was a man of action rather than words, and putting a season-ticket into my hand he bade me away to Jurles's in the Marylebone Road, to one of the little houses lying back from the main road.

As I passed up the strip of garden under the aspens I often caught sight of Jurles's old withered face blotted against the bow window, and very often met his wife, a tall and not ill-looking woman about thirty; she seemed to be always going up and down that pathway, and at that time almost anything was enough to waken an erotic suggestion, and I began to wonder if she kept trysts with any of the young men sitting on either side of the long mahogany tables bent over their books and slates. It seemed to me that there was warrant for the supposition, for as soon as old Jurles finished a lesson he went to the window and stood there, his bald head presenting an irresistible attraction for flies, a dangerous attraction, for

Jurles was quick with his hands. It is probable that Mrs. Jurles's trysts were with the butcher, baker, and grocer, for besides the half-dozen young men who arrived at ten o'clock every morning, Jurles took in several boarders, and there were never less than ten men sitting down to the midday meal, among them Dick Jurles. We all respected old Jurles, a distant, reserved gentleman and knowledgeable beyond the limits of his craft, but we laughed at Dick for his long red whiskers and moustaches, and his vulgar and familiar manners. We used to charge him in private, on what foundation I know not, probably none, with being a money-lender's tout, and no one cared to take a lesson from him, feeling him to be a fake, one who had acquired just enough education to overlook our sums or to construe a Latin text with us, feeling that if he were to ask a question we might place him in a quandary. The seventeen hundred and fifty-three young men that Messrs. Jurles had passed into the Army owed their success to the diligence of his brother and to the solemn Swiss who taught modern languages in the back room. Out of it he came every hour, a red handkerchief hanging out of his tail pocket: I will trable you now, and, my chair tilted, I used to watch him, wondering the while what kind of death each one of his pupils would meet on the battlefield, worried by the thought that my lot might be to die in defence of my country, or be wounded in her defence, which was worse still. It seemed to me that myself was my country, but having no alternative to propose to my father I accepted the Army. All professions were equally repugnant to me; I could not see myself as a doctor or as a barrister, or anything except perhaps a gentleman rider. I did not dare to tell my father that I would not go into the Army; it did not occur to me to say to him: You went to the East for five years, and when you returned

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home did little else but ride steeplechases. In many little ways I lacked courage and preferred procrastination to truth. I could not be put into the Army unless I passed the examination, and I realised that to miss passing no more was necessary than to read the *Sportsman* under the table, and spend most of the afternoon at the tobacconist's round the corner—an affable man with a long flowing moustache like Dick Jurles's, and some knowledge of betting, enough to have a book on the big races, laying the odds in shillings with his customers, cabbies from the rank; and while he teased out the half-ounces of shag we discussed the weights, the speed, and the stamina of the horses; we laid the odds and took them, and at the end of the half-year I had won five or six pounds. One day Lord Charlemont mentioned a horse as certain to win the Derby—Pretender, wasn't it? The tobacconist bet in shillings, half-crowns, and dollars, but he would take me round to the public-house and introduce me to the great bookmaker who came there to meet his customers on Thursdays and Fridays. Pretender won, and the Monday after the race the great bookie invited me behind the urinal and took ten five-pound notes out of his pocket, fifty pounds, a sum of money that enabled me to eat, drink, and smoke on terms of equality with Colville and Belfort, two young men who were fast becoming my friends—Belfort, a handsome, high-class, little fellow, bright brows and brown hair, a high-bridged nose, the mouth a little pinched, the chin a little too forward, sharp teeth, a pale complexion, and a high voice. He was going into the cavalry, and lived with his mother and sister at the top of the Albert Road, and as I lived at the bottom of the Exhibition Road it made very little difference whether I took Exhibition Road or Albert Road; there was a short-cut at the end round by some cottages with

thatched roofs, which have long ago disappeared. We made friends in this walk, and he asked me to dine with him, and we went to the theatre; later he introduced me to his mother and sister, and a very distinct picture these two women have left upon my mind: the mother frail, reserved, and dignified, with fair hair, about to turn grey, parted in the middle and brushed on either side of her thin temples. She must have worn a long gold chain, and she was always in black. The daughter had her brother's high-bridged nose, and her manner was showy—the opposite of her mother's—and I liked to find them sitting on either side of the fireplace after dinner. Now Colville was quite different from Belfort, a south Saxon if ever there was one, his ancestors having been on the land probably since Hengist and Horsa came; a man of medium height, of good trim figure and military bearing, for his thoughts were always on the Army, and his talk was of tunics and of buttons and epaulets, and very proud he was of his great military moustache which he stroked pensively with his little crabbed hand. He was often at Truefitt's getting his hair shampooed and cut closely about his small well-turned head and narrow temples, and from Truefitt's he often walked to his tailor's; he had thirty-six pairs of trousers when I first knew him, and his charm was his cheerful disposition and his somewhat empty but merry laugh.

He was the first man I had ever met who kept a woman, but that was a secret, and Belfort used to wonder how he did it on five hundred a year; he told us that he gave Minnie Granville three, reserving two for himself, and if he ran short he returned to Buckingham and lived free of cost till his next quarter's allowance allowed him to return to the clandestine little home in St. John's Wood. We envied him his lady, and on fine afternoons

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used to leave the confectioner's shop where we had luncheon and go forth to St. John's Wood for an hour before returning to Jurles, and the two of us would loiter, admiring the greensward shelving down to the canal's edge, wondering if Minnie Granville were true to Colville; we wished Colville well, but we remembered that if she remained faithful to him she would never become a celebrated light-o'-love, and we should be deprived of the honour of having known her in her early days. We had heard that Mabel Grey lived in Lodge Road, and turned into it wondering which house was hers, and, not daring to inquire, we searched South Bank and North Bank, and talking of her ponies, we gazed at the pretty balconies, hoping to catch a sight of her or her great rival, Baby Thornhill. Everybody knew these two ladies by sight, for photographs of Baby Thornhill and Mabel Grey were everywhere, in every album; and many other beautiful women were famous. Lizzie Western, the sheep, as she was called—a tall woman with gold hair and a long mild face—and Kate Cook, too, was as famous perhaps as any, Mabel Grey always excepted; Kitty Carew, Margaret Gilray, and Sally Giles her cousin, lived in South Bank, and were often on their balconies tending their birds, giving their canaries and finches seed and water; a favourite bird was a mule goldfinch and canary, a green-brown bird that would take seed from his mistress's pretty tongue. Belfort brought opera-glasses one day, and that day we were happy boys; the pony carriage was at the door. We shall see them get into it if we wait. Belfort wanted to get back to Jurles; and I should not have been able to persuade him to remain if the ponies had not presented a peculiar attraction—fiery chestnut mares, foaming at the bits, and swishing their long tails, a dangerous pair for ladies' hands to drive through crowded

streets; and the longer they were kept waiting the more restive they became, rearing over against the little groom, or striking out with their hind legs. And as soon as the ladies stepped into the carriage, before Sally was seated, they bounded forward, overthrowing the groom, and what disaster might not have happened if we had not rushed forward to their heads it is impossible to say.

The ponies have not been sufficiently exercised, that is all, Miss Gilray, and I begged Belfort to soothe Miss Giles, who was very much frightened. It would have been splendid to offer to drive the ponies into Regent's Park and bring back Spark and Twinkle chastened, but Belfort said that we must be getting back to Jurles, and we regretfully bade them good-bye. It seemed to us the merest politeness to call next day to inquire, and we were received by the cousins, platonically, of course. But even boys get their chances, and the idea came to Sally Giles to invite Belfort and me to supper, and to come to Jurles's herself with the invitation, stopping the ponies before Jurles's establishment and sending her little groom up the pathway with the note. I was at the window, and how my heart beat at the sight of him! Wearing the livery of his mistress proudly, he stopped Mrs. Jurles, who was coming down the pathway at that moment with her white Pomeranian dog, and after a talk with her, old Jurles called me aside and began his lecture: he could no longer consent to waste my father's money, and felt constrained to inform him of the company I kept. But, Mr. Jurles, the ponies were kicking, my father would never have spoken to me again if I had not gone to their heads, and Miss Giles was so frightened. Old Jurles seemed to accept my excuse as valid, and, although it was quite out of the question that such ladies should send their grooms with notes to his front door,

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still the incident might be overlooked were it not that I showed no disposition to learn anything since I came. He reminded me that he had frequently to take the *Sportsman* out of my hand. I was glad to hear from him that there was no chance of my passing for the Army, but I wished him to withhold this opinion from my father; and after some debate he promised me that I should have another chance. You must mend your ways, he added. But it was only by reading the *Sportsman* under the table that I could escape from the horrid red tunic with buttons down the front, and the belt, and if I were caught with it again Jurles would write to my father, and every day I expected to see him coming toward me with threatening brow, and to hear him say, I have received a very bad account of you from Jurles. There was some justification for my fears, for he wore a troubled look, and I caught him in whispered talk with my mother frequently; they ceased talking or spoke of indifferent things suddenly, and one night after dinner I heard him say that he was going to Ireland by the Mail. The reason of this sudden departure was not mentioned, and my mother was so often agitated that her fluttered voice caused me no alarm; my father's sudden return from the front door to give me a sovereign did not awaken a suspicion; it seemed, however, to strike my mother's imagination, and a few days later a wire came from her brother summoning us to Moore Hall.

Something dreadful must have happened! she kept repeating to herself, and her talk was full of allusions to a letter she had received from my father. At last she confided to me that he had written to her saying if she did not get a wire from him on a certain day she was to come at once. We got the morning papers coming off the boat, and there was nothing about him in them, but the

absence of news was not enough to reassure her, and I felt there was something on her mind of which she did not dare to speak. She does not appear again in my memory till we arrived at Balla. Her brother was waiting outside the gate, and I saw him take her aside and heard him say: Mary, prepare for the worst; George is dead.

We climbed on the car—Joe and my mother on one side, the driver sat on the dickey, and I remembered his back showing all the way against a grey sky and my mother wrapped in a brown shawl. Joe Blake is not so distinct to me, only his yellow mackintosh. Every now and again I heard the wail of my mother's voice, and I sobbed too, thinking of my father whom I should never speak to again. At the same time I was conscious, and this was a source of great grief to me, that my life had taken a new and unexpected turn. In the midst of my grief I could not help remembering that my father's death had redeemed me from the Army, from Jurles, and that I should now be able to live as I pleased. That I should think of myself at such a moment shocked me, and I remember how frightened I was at my own selfish wickedness, and a voice that I could not restrain, for it was the voice of the soul, asked me all the way to Moore Hall if I could get my father back would I bring him back and give up painting and return to Jurles? I tried hard to assure myself that I was capable of this sacrifice, but without much success, and I tried to grieve like my mother. But I could not.

We never grieve for anybody, parent or friend, as we should like to grieve, and are always shocked by our absent-mindedness; at one moment weeping for the dead, at another talking of indifferent things or asking casual questions as to how the dead man died. And we only remember certain moments. At will I can see myself

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and Joseph Applely in my father's bedroom standing together by the great bureau at which he wrote, and in which he kept his letters, and I remember how my eyes wandered from Joseph to the empty bed. He had been removed to the next room, or perhaps he had died in the marriage bed; however this may be, Joseph Applely told me that when he came to call the master, he was lying on his back breathing heavily, and thinking that it would be better not to disturb him he had gone away, closing the door quietly, and when he returned an hour later the master was lying just as he had left him, only he could catch no sound of breathing. So much do I remember precisely, and somewhat less precisely, that Joseph Applely told me he had sent for the doctor. A dim thought hangs about in my memory that the doctor was in the neighbourhood! be this as it may, the reason assigned for death was apoplexy. Two, three, or four days went by and I remember nothing till somebody came into the summer-room to tell my mother that if she wished to see him again she must come at once, for they were about to put him into his coffin, and catching me by the hand, she said, We must say a prayer together.

The dead man lay on the very bed in which I was born, his face covered with a handkerchief, and as my mother was about to lift it from his face the person who had brought us thither warned her from the other side of the white dimity curtains not to do so. He is changed, she said.

I don't care, my mother cried, and snatched away the handkerchief, revealing to me the face all changed. And it is this changed face that lives unchanged in my memory, and three moments of the next day: the moment when Lord John Browne bade me good-bye on the way from Carnacun (the body had been brought there for High Mass and was

being carried back to Kilttoome, a cold March wind was blowing over the fields, and he feared the journey round the lake); the moment when Father Lavelle called upon the people to hoist him on to the tomb for him to speak his panegyric; and the moment when the mason's mallets were heard closing the vault where the dead man would remain with his ancestors, one would like to say for centuries, but nothing endures in this world, not even our graves. I cannot remember who spoke after Lavelle, and afterwards the multitude began to disperse through the woods and along the shores of the lake, a great many lingering on the old stone bridge to admire the view. Of course I was very principal, and as I passed up the road I felt many eyes fixed upon me, and conjectured that they were all wondering how much of my father's talent I had inherited, and if I would take up the running at the point where he had dropped out of the race. Among the hundreds of unknown there was here and there a known face; our carpenters, sawyers, gardeners, and stable men—all our servants came from Derrinanny and Ballyholly, the villages beyond the domain over the hill along the lake's edge. And of course, I did not escape the inquisitive gaze of the men that used to row me about the islands when Lough Carra was my adventure, and they were probably thinking what I would do for them when I came to live in Moore Hall; and after these men were other faces known to me, but not so well known, the beaters whom I had seen rousing the woodcock out of the covers of Derrinrush, and it seems that when I turned from the Dark Road and walked up the lawn some of the old tenants spoke to me. I have some recollection of being spoken to at the sundial, and I think their questioning eyes reminded me that the house on the hill was mine, and they who spoke to me and those who did

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not dare to speak were mine to do with as I pleased. Until the 'seventies Ireland was feudal, and we looked upon our tenants as animals that lived in hovels round the bogs, whence they came twice a year with their rents; and I can remember that once when my father was his own agent, a great concourse of strange fellows came to Moore Hall in tall hats and knee-breeches, jabbering to each other in Irish. An old man here and there could speak a little English, and I remember one of them saying: Sure, they're only mountaineymen, yer honour, and have no English; but they have the goicks, he added with unction. And out of the tall hats came rolls of bank-notes, so dirty that my father grumbled, telling the tenant that he must bring cleaner notes; and afraid lest he should be sent off on a long trudge to the bank, the old fellow thrust the notes into my father's hand and began jabbering again. He's asking for his docket, yer honour, the interpreter explained. My father's clerk wrote out a receipt, and the old fellow went away, leaving me laughing at him, and the interpreter repeating: Sure, he's a mountaineyman, yer honour. And if they failed to pay their rents, the cabins they had built with their own hands were thrown down, for there was no pity for a man who failed to pay his rent. And if we thought that bullocks would pay us better we ridded our lands of them; cleaned our lands of tenants, is an expression I once heard, and I remember how they used to go away by train from Claremorris in great batches bawling like animals. There is no denying that we looked upon our tenants as animals, and that they looked on us as kings; in all the old stories the landlord is a king. The men took off their hats to us and the women rushed out of their cabins dropping curtsies to us until the 'seventies. Their cry, Long life to yer honour, rings still in my ears;

and the seigniorial rights flourished in Mayo and Galway in those days, and soon after my father's funeral I saw the last of this custom: a middle-aged woman and her daughter and a small grey ass laden with two creels of young chickens were waiting at my door, the woman curtseying, the girl drawing her shawl about her face shyly. She was not an ugly girl, but I had been to Lodge Road and had seen Jim Browne's pictures.

Everything was beginning for me, and everything was declining for my mother. She would have liked to linger by her husband's grave a little while, but I gave her no peace, urging the fact upon her that sooner or later we should have to go back to London. Why delay, mother? We cannot spend our lives here going to Kiltoomie with flowers. An atrocious boy as I relate him, but an engaging manner transforms reality as a mist or a ray of light transforms a landscape, and my mother died believing me to have been the best of sons, though I never sacrificed my convenience to hers. It will be admitted that that is the end we should all strive for. But the means? Ah, the means! An ancient saw this of ends and means which it will be well to leave to others to disentangle.

Awaking from a long reverie, I asked myself where I had left off, like an absent-minded old woman telling a child a story. At the part where every day spent in Moore Hall after my father's death was like a great lump of lead on my shoulders. My mother's grief increased day by day; and if her health were to break down we might be kept at Moore Hall for months. It was important to get her back to London, and I think it must have been in the train that she heard the Army had never appealed to me; I had only consented to accept the Army because I had nothing else to propose to my father; it was painting that interested me, and a studio was sought as soon as I arrived in London.

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My aspiration did not reach as high as a private studio; the naked was my desire, and a drawing-class would provide me with that. No examination was required at Limerston Street. Barthe, a Frenchman, ran the little show, of which Whistler was the attraction, and as soon as the model rested I picked my way through the easels and stood at the edge of the crowd that had collected round the famous artist. His drawings on brown-paper slips seemed to me to be very empty and casual, altogether lacking in that attitude of mind which interested me so much in Rossetti. His jokes were disagreeable to me; he did not seem to take art seriously, but I must have disguised my feelings very well, for he asked me to come to see him; any Sunday morning, he said, I should find him at 96 Cheyne Walk. The very next Sunday I went there, but there were few pictures in the studio, and I was left to look upon the melancholy portrait of his mother which he had just completed, and gathering nothing from it I turned to another picture, a girl in a white dress dreaming by the chimney-piece, her almost Rossetti-like face reflected in the mirror. Swinburne had translated her languor into verses; these were printed round the frame; and while I read them Whistler discoursed to his friends on the beauty of Oriental art, and his praise sent me to the Japanese screen, but I could discover no correct drawing in it, and begged one of the visitors to tell me how faces represented by two or three lines and a couple of dots could be considered to be well drawn. He gave me a hurried explanation, and returned to Whistler, who laughed boisterously whilst rattling iced drinks from glass to glass; and I think that I despised and hated him when he capped my somewhat foolish enthusiasm for the Pre-Raphaelite painters with a comic anecdote.

I left his house irritated, and somewhat ostentatiously

neglected him at the class, allying myself openly and defiantly to the next celebrity, for our class boasted of another, Oliver Madox Brown, son of the great Ford Madox Brown, a boy that came from Fitzroy Square, bringing with him such a reputation for genius that he paid no attention whatever to Whistler—a strange boy, stranger even than I: a long fat body buttoned in an old overcoat reaching to his knees, odd enough when upright, but odder still when crouching on the ground in front of his drawing-board, his right hand sketching rapidly, his left throwing black locks of hair from his face, of which little was seen but the great hooked nose. I could not keep him out of my thoughts, for he seemed to me even more unfortunate than myself, less likely to win a woman's love. At last my passion to know him overcame me, and I dared to speak to him. He engaged immediately in conversation just as if he wished to become my friend, and agreed to walk back to South Kensington with me. I remember the care with which I picked my words during this walk, and my object being to win him it seemed to me to be perfectly safe to ask if he were in the life-room in the Academy. My surprise was great when he answered that he had no time to spare for the Academy, all his mornings being employed upon his six-foot canvas, the *Deformed Transformed*, and wondering how he managed to give visible shape to an idea so essentially literary, I asked if he could explain his composition to me. He said that he would prefer to show me his picture, and I promised to call at Fitzroy Square, but delayed going there from day to day lest too much desire to see him and his picture might wean him from the willingness he had shown for my acquaintance; and it was not till he asked me why I had not been to see him that I summoned sufficient courage to take the train to

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Gower Street. Before me on the doorstep was a handsome middle-aged man, somewhat thick-set, with greying hair and beard, who said to me, You have come to see Oliver, haven't you? divining one of Oliver's friends in me.

We met at the class in the Fulham Road, and he asked me to come and see his picture. And you are Oliver's father? I added, the great painter. For I recognised Oliver in the handsome and kindly eyes.

Yes, yes, and he turned on the landing to ask me if I would care to come into his studio before going to see Oliver. Does he, then, think so much of Oliver that he puts him before his own pictures? I asked myself whilst he pulled the easels forward and showed me his pictures. If I may make a remark, I said aloud.

Pray do, he said.

Your hands always seem a little heavy, but perhaps that is your style, as long necks are Rossetti's.

He laughed in his beard, and we ascended the great sloping staircase. He paints in the morning, said the adoring father, and writes in the evening when he doesn't go to the class. A volume of poems was mentioned, and I asked if the manuscript had gone to the publisher. Oliver hesitates about sending it. Swinburne and Rossetti are publishing poetry, and all the literature of the Pre-Raphaelite movement has hitherto gone into verse. He drawled on, telling me that Oliver had finished a prose romance of about three hundred and fifty pages and was about to begin another, and a volume of short stories was mentioned. I ventured an inquiry, and the great painter quoted from his advice to his son: Oliver, don't waste your time on short stories. You have your six-foot canvas in the morning and your novels and poems in the evening.

I was too overwhelmed to give any answer, and Oliver paid no heed to his fond parent's admonishment. He

seemed to take it for granted that he was not like other men, and I understood that having heard himself so often spoken of as a genius he had accepted the fact of his genius as he had come to accept the fact that he could speak and hear and walk. But I, who had been brought up in the belief that I was very stupid, was astonished at my extraordinary good fortune in having met Oliver and won his good opinion. After all, come what may, this wonderful father and still more wonderful son had thought me worth speaking to for a while, and then, remembering that Oliver was writing a novel, I begged him to read me some of it if he weren't too busy. He hesitated and might have been tempted if his father had not reminded him that luncheon would be ready in a few minutes. Father and son were condescending enough to ask me to stay to lunch, but I did not dare to say yes, and descended the stairs regretting my shyness. On the door-step, while trying to summon up courage to say, On second thoughts I'll come back to lunch, I besought Oliver to bring his manuscript down to the class and read it to us during the rests. He promised to do so, and the following day when Mary Lewis left the pose and wrapped herself in a shawl (a shapely little girl she was, Whistler's model; she used to go over and talk to him during the rests), Oliver began to read, and Mary sat like one entranced, her shawl slipping from her, and I remember her listening at last quite naked. And when the quarter of an hour had gone by we begged Oliver to go on reading, forgetful of Whistler, who sat in a corner looking as cross as an armful of cats. At last, M. Barthe was obliged to intervene, and Mary resumed the pose.

Après tout, je ne veux pas que mon atelier devienne un cours de littérature, he muttered.

But we were thinking of the story, and begged Oliver

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to take up the reading again at the end of the sitting, and Whistler went away in high dudgeon, for Mary stopped behind to hear how the story ended. And a few months later we crowded together, forgetful of the model, telling how typhoid had robbed England of a great genius; and after Oliver's death my interest in the class declined.

III

Our advancements are broken or delayed by unexpected returnings to our beginnings, and my story is that a young man whom I had known at Jurles's asked me to visit him for the hunting season, and that I met a man at his house who had a horse running at Croydon but was without a jockey. So it was natural to me to propose myself, and rely on Joseph Applely's promptitude to send me my father's racing breeches and boots, which he did; and the farce was gone through of taking them down to Croydon, though the owner had written saying that he intended, or half-intended, to scratch the horse, his warning serving no purpose, for we are all mummers, and life being but a mumming, it was pleasant to think of myself taking all the jumps, the water-jump especially, in front of the stand. But to do this it was necessary to go down prepared, the breeches and boots in a brown-paper parcel under my arm, the parcel helping me to realise myself as a steeplechase jockey. No doubt that with some luck I should have got the horse round the course as well as another, but the owner having scratched the horse, and the day being wet and the Ring a couple of inches deep in mud, the result of that Croydon meeting was for me a severe cold that prevented me from taking my driving-lesson from Ward, one of the great coachmen of that

time, a lesson that I sorely needed, for I had engaged to drive a coach down to Epsom.

All the same, on four lessons this feat was accomplished, the horses meeting with no serious accident, and, encouraged by my luck, a few weeks afterwards the same party was invited by me to a great gala dinner at Richmond, and while the coach was being led over several hillocks through the furze bushes on to the dusty road, for in the darkness we had wandered into Wandsworth Common, one of my guests said to me: You mustn't think of giving up driving; your luck will never desert you. But four horses galloping on Wandsworth Common in the middle of the night! Margaret Gilray whispered to her cousin, Sally Giles, I wish we were safely at home.

These excursions passed the summer away, and in August Sally and Margaret were bidden good-bye. Belfort's brother, who was going to be married and wished to make a splash before doing so, had hired a lodge in Ross-shire. He had invited his brother, and his brother had been allowed to invite me; a great event this was, and hours were spent at the tailor's considering different patterns; at the hosiers' turning over scarves, neck-ties, and shirts of many descriptions, frilled and plain; and when my mother said that I could not have both a dressing-case costing fifty pounds and a pair of guns, I decided to have the dressing-case and to send to Moore Hall for my father's muzzle-loaders, and though forty years have gone by, I can still smile at the astonishment that the guns inspired in the Ross-shire shooting-lodge. And when it was noticed that the locks were noiseless, Captain H——, who had been told off as my companion on the morrow, was soon interested in them, and spent most of the evening with a tooth-brush trying to clean them, succeeding at last in producing a faint clicking, but not enough to

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convince him that he would be safe while shooting with me. It were better, he thought, to lend me one of his guns, and the breech-loader, the first that I held in my hands, was held fairly straight, and my bag was numerous for a boy of my appearance and conversation. Captain H—— had begun to feel that if by chance my bag were the bigger, he would be wickedly chaffed, and this misfortune might have happened to him if the boots that had won my fancy in the Sloane Street shop-window had not begun to break up, the pretty clasps and buckles being unable to resist the tough Ross-shire heather.

I can't think how you ever came by such boots. Where did you get them? They are as wonderful as your guns! How do you contrive to hit off the extraordinary?

And I told him that it was not until the last moment, between six and seven in the evening, that I remembered I had forgotten to order any shooting boots. My feet, you see, being as small as a woman's, the ready-made shooting boots in the Brompton Road were too large for me; all the shops were shutting, I was getting frantic when I saw a line of boots in a shop-window in Sloane Street marked Ladies' Boots for the Highlands! They'll fit me, I said to myself. You see they do, only——

I shall have to take you round to-morrow to the local cobbler.

The noiseless locks, the ladies' boots, and the admission that I was always in love supplied the Ross-shire shooting-lodge with matter for humorous conversation, and as I sat before my fire in Ely Place I heard my nickname, Mr. Perpetual. To be ridiculous has always been *mon petite luxe*, but can any one be said to be ridiculous if he knows that he is ridiculous? Not very well. It is the pompous that are truly ridiculous. A random thought carried me out of Ely Place across the years to Lodge

Road, and I can see myself and the company and the room: a round table on which are beef and salad, Cheshire cheese and beer, the supper provided by the fair cousins. Canaries are shrilling in their cages, and the bow-window is hung with rep curtains, and the sofa, too, is rep. There is wax fruit on the sideboard, and Sally and Margaret wear the tight bump-revealing dresses that succeeded the pious crinoline. Side-whiskers have not disappeared altogether; Belfort and myself, Humphries and Norton—two cavalry officers—are shaved only to mid-cheek. Incident after incident rises up and floats away like cigarette smoke, one incident retaining my attention a little longer than the others—the evening that Belfort refused to smoke one of my cigars, saying that he preferred to smoke one of his own manillas. He lighted one, and it was just beginning to draw when, impertinently, I tore it out of his teeth and flung it into the fire. A joke it had seemed to me, but he rushed for the poker and would have brained me with it if I had not slipped round the table and seized Colville's sword and, unsheathing it in a moment, warded off the blow aimed at my head, and seeing another coming, it occurred to me that the best way to save myself would be to run Belfort through, and he would have received a thrust that might have done for him if one of the cavalry officers had not armed himself with a chair. The sword sank in the upholstery, and by that time Belfort had recovered his temper, and a few minutes after he was smoking one of my cigars in token of reconciliation. One of the cavalry officers asleep on the sofa is another memory that Time has not rubbed away, and Margaret coming to sit on my knees, perhaps because she had been warned not to inflame Mr. Perpetual. Her dressmaker had brought home a beautiful blue tea-gown that evening; she was wearing it for the first time, and its folds of corded

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silk floated over my knees. The very weight and shape of her are remembered, and our inquietude whether the officer was shamming sleep or was asleep. The tea-gown had seemed to me the very painting robe that I needed, for art was never altogether out of my mind, and I had been thinking for some time of Saturn sitting in the shady sadness of a vale as a subject for a picture that my poor dead Oliver would have liked to paint. It would have been of no avail to offer it to Jim Browne, for he could not draw from Nature. A few months later I discovered another which he would have carried out if he had lived: the Witch of Atlas calls to Hermaphroditus, and I could see his wings catching the fainting airs bearing the boat up the shadowy stream to the austral waters beyond the fabulous Thamondacona, without, however, being able to arrange the figures so that they filled the canvas—the sinuous back of the witch, her arm upon the helm, looking up at Hermaphroditus; and one day Jim Browne was implored to say what was wrong with the composition.

Give me your palette and go upstairs and dress yourself. Take off that ridiculous garment, he added, thereby humiliating me, for Margaret Gilray's tea-gown had seemed an excellent painting robe, an advance on the smock which Jim wore in his own studio. But it would be henceforth discarded, for Jim was now my mentor, my hero, my boon companion. It was my pride to be seen in Piccadilly with this fine Victorian gentleman whom I recall best on a wintry day; he never wore an overcoat, but buttoned his braided coat tightly about him and swung a big stick. Long flaxen locks fell thick over the collar, and his peg-tops blew about in the wind; he was known to everybody as Piccadilly Jim or Piccadilly Browne, I have forgotten which. We met everybody between Hyde Park Corner and St. James's Street, and Jim saluted his acquaintances

with a How are you? never a How do you do? He very rarely stopped to speak to any, but strode on quickly, mentioning the name of the passer-by, and I could but try to fix in my memory the appearance of the notable, regretting that Jim did not stop, that I had not been introduced. He liked to quiz me, and sometimes there was plenty of reason for mockery, and sometimes there was none, but in either case he quizzed me, turning some simple phrase into ridicule, as when I mentioned, regretfully—perhaps it was the note of regret in my voice that caused him to laugh at me—that my hair was yellower than his. How he used to drag out the word yellow, making me feel dreadfully ashamed of myself, until at last summoning up courage, I asked him if there was anything foolish in what I had said, and to my surprise he answered no. Then why had he been laughing at me all this while? and I listened to Jim again, for he was now asking, out of politeness—he always decided these questions—whether it would be more amusing to dine at the St. James's or at Kettners' or at the Café de la Régence. It did not matter which. In whichever he might choose I could learn his taste in food, and my hope was that with practice I might acquire it; his taste in everything seemed essential, especially in women, and to make myself more perfectly acquainted with it, I drew his attention to the ladies dining at the distant tables, never daring, however, to hazard an opinion unless one seemed to realise all the ideals of beauty set forth in his pictures, and if he deigned to approve of any woman's face and figure at Cremorne Gardens or in the Argyle Rooms, I used to mark her down for future study. My mistakes were numerous, and I was ashamed if he caught me talking to a woman whom he did not admire, and very proud if my choice met his approval, as it

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happened to do one day in the Park. I had stopped to speak to Kitty Carew, letting him walk on in front, and on overtaking him half-way down the pathway, he said: Yes, indeed, a very pretty woman. You were in luck, George, when you picked her up.

Jim's satellite I was, but given to wandering out of my orbit. There were other companions whom Jim looked upon contemptuously—the Maitlands—and Jim's contempt was shared by my gaunt Irish servant, William Mullowney, who used to enrage me when he came into the drawing-room with his Sor, Mr. Dhurty Maitland has called to see you. It was quite true that Sydenham presented a somewhat neglected appearance, but, however, just William's criticism might be, he could not be allowed to speak to me of my friends with contempt. This Derrinanny savage must be sent back to Moore Hall, I said. But a moment's indignation does not add much to my story; I must tell how I made Sydenham's acquaintance.

When we arrived from Mayo we had gone to live in Thurloe Square, in the house of a very genteel lady who did not let lodgings but who might be persuaded, so the house agent had said, to let us have her drawing-room floor and some bedrooms for five or six guineas a week. She often asked me into her parlour and talked to me about her connections and the neighbourhood, and, seeing I was at a loose end without companions, inspired by some connection of ideas, she said one day she would introduce me to the Maitland boys, the sons of a retired stipendiary magistrate from Athlone. The mother was a wonderful pianist, the boys were all clever, the three younger sons had a room to themselves at the bottom of the house where they painted scenery, wrote verses, and composed music. William and Dick, the two older brothers, had taken the Lyceum Theatre,

and were going to produce *Chilperic*, a comic opera by Hervé. She tapped at the window and Sydenham came in, and his news was that a letter had arrived that morning from Hervé. He was coming over to play the title-rôle himself. Everything is relative, and at that moment of my life it was very wonderful for me to go to the Maitlands' house and to hear the scores of *Chilperic* played by Sydenham and his mother. We received boxes and stalls from the Maitlands, and after a run of nearly six months, *Chilperic* was taken off to make way for the composer's later opera, *Le Petit Faust*. But it did not please as much as its predecessor, and the theatre had to be closed. Dick had, however, managed to escape bankruptcy; half a success guarantees that another door shall be opened to the retiring manager, and in the 'seventies, a few months after my father's death, he brought over the entire company from Les Folies Dramatiques to play in French, *Chilperic*, *L'Eoile Crevé*, *Le Canard à Trois Becs*, and possibly *Le Petit Faust*. He sent me seats whenever I asked him, and I used to sit in the stalls learning all the little choruses and couplets night after night, admiring Paola Marée, a pretty and plump brunette, who sang enchantingly as she tripped across the stage, and Blanche d'Antigny, a tall fair woman who played the part of a young shepherd. She wore a white sheepskin about her loins, and looked as if she had walked out of Jim's pictures. I learnt from Dick that she was a great light-o'-love, sharing the Kingdom of Desire with Hortense Schneider and Léonine Leblanc.

It was well to sit in the stalls as Dick's guest, and it would have been wonderful to accompany him through the stage door on to the stage, and be introduced to the French actresses to whom he spoke in French every night. But I could not speak French, and I vowed to learn the

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language of these women, who disappeared suddenly like the swallows, leaving me meditating what lives they lived in Paris, until Dick's new theatrical venture, a translation of Offenbach's *Brigands*, put them out of my head. For he had collected in the Globe Theatre the most beautiful women in London to form the corps of the *gendarmérie* that always arrived an hour too late to arrest the brigands; and one of the attractions of the piece was Mademoiselle d'Anka, a beautiful Hungarian, who sang Offenbach's little ditties bewitchingly, and a song that Arthur Sullivan had written for her, *Looking Back*. Madame Debreux, a pretty brunette whom Dick had brought over, for he loved her, was in the cast, and Nelly Bromley, who was loved by the Duke of Beaufort, was in it too. A lovelier garland was never wreathed, and there was no lovelier flower in it than Marie de Grey, who never kissed any one except for her pleasure, and yet managed to live at the rate of three or four thousand a year. There was a woman who wore a green dress in the second act; her nose was too large, but her thighs were beautiful; and there was a pretty tall, fair woman, whom I ran across in Covent Garden on her way to the theatre, and whom I took to lunch. She would have loved me if my heart had not been engaged elsewhere, but, as usual, I abandoned the prey for the shadow. And the shadow was the stately Annie Temple, who dared not listen to my courtship for dread of the rage of her fierce cavalry officer, a stupid fellow who snarled at me once so threateningly at the stage door that Annie must fain refuse me her photograph. Dot Robins's mother sold me one for a sovereign, and from it I painted many portraits. Jim painted one from memory, mentioning again and again while he painted it that Annie was as tall as Mademoiselle d'Anka, whose acquaintance he had made on her arrival in London,

before the theatre opened. It was he who introduced me to her, and he was glad now that I was able to get free seats at the Globe, and disappointed that Dick would not allow me to bring him behind the scenes. I should have liked to chaperon him, but it was a feather in my cap to leave him sitting in his box and skip away to the dressing-rooms, and when I returned we would lay our heads together trying to discover which was the handsomer woman, Annie Temple or Marie de Grey. Annie, in his opinion, was the finer woman, being as big, in fact, as Alice Harford, and he confided to me then and there that he used to meet Alice in a most romantic nook at the end of a little paved alley off the Fulham Road. He believed her to be in keeping and unfaithful only with him; all the same, she proposed one night at Cremorne to meet me at the nook; and, delighted with my success, I could not refrain from telling Jim all about it, just to take him down a peg. But the result of this indiscretion was that Alice did not come to the nook at the time appointed, and I walked down the paved alley meditating that once again I had missed the prey for the shadow. And, as if my punishment were not enough, Jim continued to talk of her beauty, telling that her legs were shapelier than Mademoiselle d'Anka's; they did not go in at the knee, and this great beauty, or this great fault, formed the theme of many conversations in the studio in Prince's Gardens; Boucher's women did not go in at the knee, but Rubens's did, and laying his palette aside, Jim would throw himself on the sofa and tell me for the hundredth time that the only women worth loving were tall women with abundant bosom and flaxen hair, the only women that men with a sense of the beautiful could admire.

But long before this my guardian, Lord Sligo, wrote Jim a letter which brought him round to Alfred Place,

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and sitting on the edge of the table he read it to my mother, saying that if she agreed with Sligo's strictures, there would be nothing for him to do but to refuse to see George any more, and if she didn't agree with Sligo, the best thing would be to write to him saying that she thought Sligo was mistaken. Foreseeing that Lord Sligo would read any such letter from her as Please mind your own business, my mother hesitated, but I insisted, feeling that Jim's friendship was necessary to me. All the same, Lord Sligo's letter was not without avail. It stimulated Jim to moralise, and when I called in the afternoon to ask him if he would come up to Piccadilly to dine somewhere, and go on to the Argyle Rooms, he would read me a long lecture on the dangers of women.

The strong and healthy man refrains from women, and when I asked him if he always refrained from them himself he said he refrained as long as he could, and advocated a strong and energetic life to me. He said he would like to see me shoulder a gun and go away; not to Scotland to shoot grouse, but to Africa. Every young man should go forth and lead a natural life. Abyssinia was often mentioned, and to discover the source of the Nile was held up to me as an ambition suitable to my health and my fortunes. I should come back a far finer man than I went out. Alice Harford and Annie Temple were probably given to us so that we might resist their seductions, which were very trivial to a man who had got anything in him. And if Abyssinia and the source of the Nile appeared too slight an adventure, there remained the Sahara and the Mountains of the Moon and Timbuctoo, where no European had been, but which a determined man might reach, and in his imagination Jim would roam through the great equatorial forests, filled, he said, with cities, relics of a civilisation that had passed away, now

inhabited only by lions, and to encourage me to accept an African adventure he would pull out a picture of a troop of elephants plunging through some reeds into a river while a gorilla disported himself on the branches of a dead tree. This led us to consider the exploits of Du Chaillu, who had shot the first gorilla. The animal had approached thumping his breasts with his fists, and the sound that he produced was that of a big drum. Du Chaillu had, however, knelt unmoved, saying to himself, Not yet. The gorilla approached another ten steps, and Du Chaillu said, Not yet; and again the gorilla approached, and Du Chaillu said, Fire! and the gorilla rolled over dead at Du Chaillu's feet after twisting the rifle as if it were a bit of wire. Jim admired such nerve as this, and it recalled to him an excellent shot he had made years ago when he was staying at Moore Hall. He had said he would like to shoot a marten, and had taken a rifle with him; martens were rare even at that time, but he had caught sight of one at the end of a branch, and had shot it, and the incident had inspired him to think that he would like to wait for a lion in the moonlight at the foot of a tree. A moment like that is worth living for! And exalted by the thought he would seize his palette and paint Cain amid the rocks by the sea under a darkening sky, his arm thrown about his sleeping sister, a spear within his right arm; and as if the terrific lion stealing down upon him were not sufficient terror Jim would sketch a lioness and her whelps in the background. As all the beasts in the picture were roaring, Jim roared in accompaniment, while whirling a mass of vermillion and white upon his palette; and then, uttering a deep growl, he would rush forward and a red tongue would appear; and when he had mixed emerald green with white he would advance some paces, cat-like, and then, snarling,

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would leap forward, and a moment after a great green eye started out of the darkness.

He retreated to watch the effect of his work, and in the frenzy of creation, soliloquised, explaining to himself, and to me, the reason why his pictures were refused by the Academy. The art that the Academicians catered for was a meanly realistic art, and for them to accept his picture of Cain defending his wife from wild beasts, the lion's mane would have to be painted from the bearskin rug, every hair put in; and the dove that Jim's memory of Alice Harford had rescued from Cupid and which she clasped to her bosom, would have to be studied from a dead pigeon sent round from the poulterer's.

Alice's great blonde body was finely conceived, and the movement of her shoulders bending over the eager boy was well enough, somewhat rudimentary, but better in a way than the frigid sophistications that pass for art in Burlington House. If he had nothing else he had the sense of the noble and the beautiful, but was he speaking the whole truth when he said that the Academicians would hang the picture if every feather were imitated from real feathers? Did he believe it to be as well painted as the Correggio in the National Gallery? Was the modelling of that shoulder altogether faultless? Was it not emptier than the Correggio? Was not the Correggio more real? At that moment it became clear to me that the feet were not as beautiful as those in the bright picture of the Italian master, and that Jim could not make them as beautiful, for he had not learned to draw and to paint from Nature. If he had gone to the Academy schools and subjected his genius to discipline, he might have been the great painter of modern times; but I could not see Jim attending the Academy schools, drawing patiently from the model, working out the

shadows with a stump. My thoughts must have stopped there if they ever got quite so far; and now the explanation of the enigma seems to me that Jim was one born before due time and out of due place, in Mayo in 1830. For his talent to have ripened fully he should have been born in Venice in 1660. His mentality was of that period, and his appearance coincided with his talent—splendid shoulders, fine head upreared, an over-modelled brow, a short aquiline nose, proud nostrils, long languid hands. But why enumerate? A portrait by Van Dyke.

Get out of my way, he cried, and squeezing out the best part of a tube of raw umber on his palette and breaking it with a little black, he whisked in the lion's tail, and with another brush sought out the yellow ochre and the Naples yellow, and Cain's wife received such a dower of tresses that I was thrilled. It was my sense of the voluptuous and romantic that drew me to Jim and his pictures, and I remember him crossing the room one day and seeking among the canvases and returning with a small one, six feet by four, in which a brown satyr overtook a nymph at the corner of a wood. My eyes dilated and I licked my lips.

The best thing you have ever painted in your life, Jim. Why do you turn it away to the wall?

He murmured something about his sisters who sometimes came into the room unexpectedly, and throwing himself on the sofa melted into another of those long soliloquies very dear to me at that time—a flow of talk of Michael Angelo, Rubens, and Raphael; and mixed with his remembrances of the pictures he had seen in Italy were remembrances of pictures and statues that he had modelled and painted himself, the colossal statue of Caractacus that he had exhibited in London when he

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was seventeen, and the great picture of the Battle of Arbela, forty feet wide by twenty feet high, containing several life-size elephants. At that time he had painted and modelled in the same studio, leaving the picture for the statue and the statue for the picture, and, my admiration roused, I begged him to tell me where were these pictures and this statue; but without answering my question he broke into a criticism of Ary Scheffer's picture of the Devil offering Christ the Kingdom of Earth if he would cast himself down and worship him. Christ raises his hand and the gesture portrays the famous words, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God, while the Devil points downward.

The two men are speaking at the same time.

And in your picture, Jim?

Christ listens while the Devil offers him the earth, he answered, and he did not speak again for a long time so that I might better appreciate his genius. An intense moment of appreciation was when he said that no gallery in the world afforded so many beautiful pictures to his sight as did a dirty ceiling. He had only to half close his eyes to see Last Judgments finer than Michael Angelo's, and if he closed his eyes a little he could rediscover his Battle of Arbela.

The lost picture, I said. But, Jim, the satyr overturning the nymph; is he visible in the ceiling above your head?

Jim laughed.

Perhaps not in this ceiling, but in the ceiling above the little sofa at Alice Harford's.

These lapses of humour jarred a little, and I was glad when he lowered his eyes from the ceiling and remained quite still considering the picture of the nymph and the satyr, and I thrilled again when he said, That picture has

all the beauties of Raphael and other beauties besides. In youth one likes exaggeration, and in response to my cry for Art Jim said: If you want to learn painting you must go to France.

His words were like All ashore; the vessel moves away, but so slowly that one does not feel it is moving, and three weeks after my arrival in Paris I wrote to Jim from the Hôtel Voltaire, Quai Voltaire, asking him if he would come over and stay with me; I had a room which I did not use and he was welcome to it. But he wrote saying that he could not come over to Paris at present; and I was very much hurt by his ironical thanks for the room which I could not use. But it is the room that one does not use one offers a friend, not one's own bedroom, I said, and continued to consider his rude letter, wondering what had provoked it, without being able to discover any reason. Some months later he wrote again, this time in French, and to prove to *mes camarades d'atelier* that it was possible for an Englishman to write French I took the letter out of my pocket, and while they scanned it, picking out the English locutions, it struck me that if Jim was mistaken about his French he might well be mistaken about his pictures. And to convince myself of their worth I described the compositions to Julian—*Julius Caesar Overturning the Altar of the Druids, The Bridal of Triermain, Cain Shielding his Wife from Wild Beasts*—and Julian listened indulgently over many cups of coffee. He was becoming my intimate friend, allowing me to take him out to dinner and to treat him to the theatre; I was a little personage in his circle when a tall young man came into the studio late one afternoon—Lewis Welden Hawkins it was—and as we went with him to the café to drink a bowl of punch (the custom of the studio was that every newcomer should stand a bowl of punch), he turned and spoke

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to me in English, asking me, after a few remarks, if we had not met in Jim Browne's studio.

The name of Jim Browne carried me back to Prince's Gardens and to the moment when Jim introduced me to a tall young man whom I did not altogether like, so contemptuous was he of Jim's genius, and of me when I invited him to come forward and tell me what he thought of *Cain Shielding his Wife from Wild Beasts*. He was Jim's cousin, and therefore in a roundabout way my cousin; he had come over to London with a young Frenchwoman whom he called Louise, and I remembered Jim saying: I hope you have turned out something, meaning that he hoped that Lewis had painted a picture, for he had left the Navy to study painting; but the young man had answered, I don't know if I have turned out anything, but I have turned up a good deal, an answer which displeased me. There was no time to remember any more. We had arrived at the café; the conversation had become general, and the first thing that was borne in upon me was that Lewis spoke French like a Frenchman; his thoughts moved in the language, which was not extraordinary, since he was born in Brussels, and when we returned to the studio the whole studio gathered about his easel and admired his audacity, for he had sketched in the model and the entire background—the stove that kept the model warm, the screen behind which he dressed and undressed, and the yellow curtain which sheltered him from drafts. The elders, Renouf and Boutet de Monvel, saw through Lewis's facility; to them it was merely *du chic*, Ignorance giving itself airs, but to me who could not express myself at all, and who spent a whole week stuttering and stammering through a wretched drawing, the hour's work on Lewis's canvas was almost as wonderful as one of Jim's pictures.

His manners were winning and easy; he crossed the studio with a deference proper in a new-comer, and seating himself in front of my drawing he advised me. And at five o'clock, when the studio closed, we went away together in a carriage, for he wanted to show me his studio, which was far away behind the Gare du Nord, too far to walk; moreover, he was in a hurry. But he seemed to forget his hurry when we reached the Place Maubeuge, remembering suddenly that he had to see Louise, who lived in the Rue Maubeuge. And it being always pleasant to see a woman, I was disappointed when the concierge said that Madame was not at home. But another friend of his lived up the street. She was not at home either, so he scribbled a note in the concierge's lodge, and betought himself of another. She too was out; *mais si monsieur veut monter . . . la bonne est en haut*. No, he was in a hurry. He scribbled another note; we dashed into the cab again. But he must speak with—— We jumped out, and in the middle of a low-ceilinged room he engaged in conversation with a lady who came from her bedroom somewhat flurried in a peignoir. She spoke to me in English, but as soon as she turned to Lewis she dropped into French, which she seemed to speak very well, for I noticed that instead of saying *Vous avez tort*, as I should have said, she said *Je vous donne tort*, a phrase which I did not know and kept chewing all the way to his studio, while he confided to me that he was now living with an English girl who had come over with a theatrical company to Brussels. He was expecting her to call for him, so there was female society to look forward to, and the carriage drew up at the door of the house in which he was living.

You won't have to go up many stairs. I am on the *entre-sol*, he said. His studio was a large room with a

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great fireplace, in which he had hung an iron pot on a chain. The fireplace had cost seven hundred and fifty francs; seven hundred and fifty francs represented no actual sum of money to me; it was a pitiful thing to have to turn francs into pounds and to have to ask if any cooking was done in the pot, for of course I should have known that the pot and chain were decorative effect, as were the Turkish lamps and draperies, as indeed everything in the room was, including Lewis himself, especially when he took a fiddle from the wall and began playing.

Stradella's *Chant d'Eglise*—do you know it?

Alas! I didn't, and after hearing it my wonderment increased, for Lewis said that he did not know a note of music, but had met a vagrant once and had picked up some knowledge of the fiddle in half a hour. He soon wearied of the fiddle, and going to a small organ he strummed snatches of Verdi's *Requiem*, till a young girl entered the room out of breath.

Lewis!

She stopped suddenly on seeing me, and turning his head he introduced me to a beautiful girl, and one in the bloom of her first beauty, a tall girl of seventeen or eighteen, with brown eyes and fair hair. She had come to fetch Lewis to dinner, and it occurred to me that she might be disappointed at finding me with Lewis. But he assured me they would be glad of my company if I didn't mind dining at Alphonsine's. Not the least. But who was Alphonsine? An old light-o'-love, he said, who gathered all her friends around her *table d'hôte*, at three francs and a half. His supercilious style delighted me, and he left me talking to Alice while he crossed the street to order some coals at the *charbonnerie*, and he looked such a fine fellow, as he stepped from one paving-

stone to the other, that Alice could not restrain her admiration.

What a toff he is!

A toff he was, not a tailor's toff, but one of Nature's toffs, a tall, thin young man and yet powerful, his long arms could no doubt deal a swinging blow on occasions, and in a race his long legs would have carried him past many a competitor. His shoulders were ample, and his small face was not spoilt by a broken nose. He must have told me how his nose was broken; I have forgotten; but in my memory of him it contrasts happily with the soft violet eyes, giving character to the face—a face which absorbed and interested me all the evening, my eyes returning to him again and again as he leaned across the table telling stories in fluent French, delighting everybody, the men as well as the women, assembled under the awning.

What is he saying? Alice asked me. I could not tell her, alas! He thinks he is such a fine man that all he would have to do would be to strip himself naked and walk into a woman's room for her to fall down and adore him.

I begged her to tell me about Marie Pellegrin.

You admire her, don't you? Well, she'll cost you a thousand francs; but if you were a *voyou*——

What's a *voyou*?

A cad—you could have her for nothing.

And if she is rich why does she come here? Are all the women here worth a thousand francs?

Alice laughed scornfully and broke off the conversation, and applied herself to trying to understand what Lewis was saying.

I wonder why she came here. She must have left the Grand Duke.

What Grand Duke?

All dukes are the same. Do hold your tongue.

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Lewis told me afterwards that Marie had been to Russia and had had hundreds of thousands of francs from the Grand Duke, but she liked *les voyous du quartier* better, and returned to them when she was bored. She had just come back from Russia and was spending her earnings in the Rue Breda, and, intoxicated with the romance of the story, I begged of Lewis to tell me more about her. But he had told me all he knew, and Alice sat very much annoyed, for she was just as pretty a girl as Marie Pellegrin, and if she had had the luck to be introduced to Grand Dukes she would know how to put her money to better use.

We were in a victoria, for Lewis had proposed an excursion to Bullier, and a train of cabs crossed Paris, over the bridge down the Rue du Bac and round the Luxembourg. But I cannot write with the same insight and sympathy of the Bal Bullier as I did of the Elysée Montmartre, in the story entitled *The End of Marie Pellegrin*. I am of Montmartre kin, and Bullier, unhallowed by memories, rises up a mere externality, a crowd pushing through the tables and chairs set under trees, sweating waiters doing their best, and the band under cover, a sort of exaggerated shed into which one walked from the garden. I never danced at Bullier, and it matters little to me that the finest can-can dancers assembled there; polkas and waltzes were looked upon as a kind of waste of time, but the moment the band struck up a quadrille, a crowd formed in dense rings, and the merits of the kickers were discussed as eagerly as the toreadors in Madrid and Seville. The grisettes of the quarter advanced kicking furiously, and about one in the morning the company separated through the Latin quarter, the Montmartrians returning by themselves, for nothing was more rare than for a Montmartrian to bring

a grisette back with him, the girls being with one accord faithful to their quarter.

Lewis and Alice dropped me at the Hôtel de Russie, going on themselves to the Rue St. Denis, somewhere between the Boulevard Sebastopol and the Gare du Nord, I think. My last words to him were, You'll be sure to be at the studio to-morrow, for I was anxious that Julian should see my cousin's picture, and I can see myself still bringing him round to Lewis's easel. An instinctive fellow Julian was, divining at once a useful ally in Lewis, and, to make sure of him, Julian proposed a few weeks later that we—Lewis, myself, Julian, Renouf, Boutet de Monvel, and a few others—should take the first boat next Sunday morning to Bas Meudon. The landscape painters, he said, would find some pretty motives along the banks of the Seine; the others could go for a walk, and I remember that Renouf and Boutet de Monvel went off together, and returned an hour later saying that they had found nothing that tempted them. Whereas Lewis had been immediately struck by the picturesque ascension of the staircase leading up from the river to the village. Was it jealousy that stayed them from admiring his facility? I asked myself, for they did not seem to admire the picture that Lewis had nearly completed on a panel; bestowing only a casual glance at it, they began to talk about breakfast; but Lewis could not be persuaded to lay aside his palette overflowing with bitumen and cadmium yellow; he continued to add bits of drawing, and I to admire the perspective and to wonder how he did it; Alice watched him from under her sunshade, and Julian caught my serious attention when he said: All that facility will go for nothing if he doesn't come to work at the studio. We found the others waiting for us at the door of the restaurant, very impatient,

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and to my delight our table was laid under a trellis, and the green leaves and the white table appealed to my imagination, and the cutlets and the omelettes linger in my memory, and the races that we ran in the evening when the bats came out, Lewis beating me a little in one race, for his legs were longer, but only just beating me, whereupon one whose name I cannot recall challenged me to race him for a bottle of champagne, and Lewis whispered, Take him on; you'll run away from him. And to my surprise Lewis's judgment turned out right; my competitor gave up after a few yards, we drank his champagne, and the boat took us back to Paris, all a little conscious that the last lights of a happy day were dying—a day that I felt I should never forget. We shall be thinking of this day when we are old men, I said to Lewis, and was ashamed for a moment of my emotion. He had not heard, he was talking to Alice. The night gathered about the green banks of the Seine, and the dim poplars struck through the last bar of light which seemed as if it could not die; the month being June, it lingered between grey clouds till the boat had passed under the first bridge. . . .

And then, bridge after bridge, the landing, the separations, each one returning to his bed, his mind filled with remembrances of blue air, and flowing water, and swaying trees. Did Alice return with Lewis? I think so. She was certainly with us a few weeks later, for Lewis had caught sight of a picturesque corner, and was full of scorn of Renouf and Boutet de Monvel who had missed it, and we three returned to Bas Meudon for Lewis to paint it. But the Seine was so sunny the morning we arrived that a swim suggested itself to Lewis, and a boat was hired, and a boatman rowed us to the near side of an island. Alice, who could not swim at all, remained in

the shallows with me, who could swim only a little, and splashing about together we watched Lewis disporting himself in mid-stream, breasting the current, head up-reared, turning over on his side and rushing through the water like some great fish. We admired him until he passed behind the island; and then Alice would have me teach her to swim. We were getting on nicely when, in sport, I threatened to duck her. She screamed to me to let her go, and as soon as I lost hold of her she went under, coming up unconscious, though she had not been under the water for more than a few seconds. The boatman came to my assistance quickly, and Lewis came swimming by, and together we got her into the boat. Good God, Lewis, try to bring her to, I cried, falling on my knees beside her, terribly frightened, for Lewis was so angry with me that I could not doubt that he would pitch me into the river if he failed to revive her. At last she opened her eyes, and after a tender scene between her and Lewis, we rowed back to the inn, where her beauty inspired much commiseration.

A day has been wasted, Lewis said, for his mind was fixed upon the corner he had selected, and he went away next morning without me, the boat not being large enough to hold two painters. You don't want to paint. You had better remain and talk to Alice. But it was impossible to persuade Alice out of her bed, and feeling, I suppose, that I was as negligible a quantity in love as in art she invited me, after some hesitation, into her room; and we used to gossip there every morning when Lewis went away to paint until gossip busied itself with us, and one day he told us that he was returning to Paris next day. We could see that something had gone wrong, and at last we got the truth out of him. People at the inn had begun to notice that I went into Alice's room as

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soon as he went out painting. Alice lost her temper quickly; I protested, and Lewis said: Of course I know she wouldn't have anything to do with you; all the same, I don't wish to pass for a cuckold. A very rude answer I felt this to be, but held my tongue, and we returned to Paris next day, all three rather angry and disappointed, and Lewis discouraged, for his picture had not turned out well; it had, indeed, turned out so badly that landscape painting was not mentioned again that summer. And it was not until the fall that he began to speak of Cernay, a beautiful country celebrated among painters, not more than fifty or sixty kilometres from Paris. His suggestion was that we might go there for a week, and I consented, for I wanted to see the inn whose walls had been decorated by every painter that had stayed there—by every man of talent,—for this inn-keeper would not hand over his walls to be daubed by me and my like. And wondering if Lewis were trying to fool me, or if it were really true that Cernay was a relic of the Middle Ages that had escaped civilisation, I asked him if he proposed to pay his bill with a picture, and if the inn-keeper would accept poems from me in exchange for what I owed him. You see now I have told you the truth, he said as soon as we entered the inn, and I looked round the rooms seeing every subject that had ever been treated dashed here and there: seascapes, horses ploughing, battle-pieces, ravens, parrots, ladies in their shifts amid pillows, swine on the hillside, and herds of cattle winding through fields, a birchen wood showing aloft on a hillside which Lewis said was worth all the other pictures put together, and he mentioned the name of the painter of a large flower-piece, and we should have admired his peonies longer if the inn-keeper had not been at our heels waiting for us to choose our rooms. It may have been for reasons of

economy that we elected to sleep in the same room. It may have been that the inn-keeper had only one room to offer us. For good or evil reasons we slept in the same room, of that I am sure, for I was awakened in the middle of the night by Lewis trying to find matches to light a candle. He was going into the backyard. A dog began to bark, and Alice sat up, quaking, beseeching me to go to Lewis's help and save him from being devoured. It seemed to me that I had better waken the inn-keeper, and, while I was standing in the middle of the floor wondering what had better be done, Lewis returned. The dog had rushed at him, but fortunately was on a chain.

But, Lewis, if you had been within reach, or if the chain had snapped!

And the depth of her passion may be judged from the discussion that arose between her and me as to what one would do if one had to eat something incredibly nasty or drink a cup of poison. Alice's point was that it mattered a great deal from whence the nastiness came; if it came from Lewis she would sooner eat a pound than a pinch if it came from me and she woke up Lewis to ask him if he would not return her the compliment, and was very angry when he said that a crap was the same all the world over, and he would prefer to swallow a pinch rather than a pound, no matter who owned it.

We certainly pigged it together, pigs no doubt, but aspiring pigs, who went out in the morning to the borders of the lake to paint, Lewis able to get down a large willow-tree in the foreground, retaining some parts of the view, rejecting others, myself quite uninterested in trying to arrange the lake as Corot might have arranged it, but unable to express myself, fumbling with the beautiful outline of the shore, which I could not fit into the canvas,

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till Alice, who had not risen so early as we, came to meet us and joined in Lewis's criticism of my abortive drawings, giggling under her parasol and echoing Lewis's opinions.

Of course there must be a willow-tree and a man in a boat to make a picture. Give me your charcoal, and he began to recompose, bringing the edge of the wood into my canvas. Don't you see?

No, Lewis, I don't see; the edge of the wood doesn't come into my vision.

It should come in to make a picture; and he strove hard vulgarising what I had done, and doing this so successfully that in the end he had to hand me back my pencil, saying he was sorry, that perhaps it was better the way I had it. Alice did not think so, and we strolled over to admire Lewis's work, which captured all her admiration. I think that is how Corot would have seen it, he said, and we watched the slate-coloured lake amid its autumn tints and sedges, and returned to Paris a few days afterwards without a picture, to continue——

Good heavens! it is twelve o'clock, and I have been sitting here dreaming since ten! And my eyes went to the large fat volume on the table, not one line of which I had read.

IV

As soon as Teresa had removed the tablecloth my eyes went to a bulky volume, *The Brothers Karamasov*, and, determined to break the back of the story, I threw myself into an armchair, saying: If I read fifty pages every evening I shall soon get through it. And I read on and on through the fifty pages that my conscience had stipulated for, and might have read to a hundred if the endless

corridors down which I had been wandering and the great halls through which I had passed had not suddenly seemed to dissolve into vapour. A talent, I said, that appeals to the young men of to-day. The pigmy admires the giant, however loosely his frame may be put together, and our young writers lift their pale etiolated faces to Dostoievsky. We've had enough of Art, is their cry, give us Nature, and this book fulfils all their aspirations. It is impersonal and vague as Nature, I said, returning to the consideration of the book, finding myself obliged to admit that I could detect a dribble of outline in Aloysha, as much as may be detected in the ikons on the walls. A man of genius without doubt, on a different plane from our miserable writers of fiction, but inferior to his own countrymen, to one at least, Turgenev, and on the whole inferior to Balzac. Some rough spots there may be in Balzac, some rocks, but rocks are better than marsh, and my thoughts went to the philosophical studies, to *Louis Lambert*, *Seraphita*, *Jesus Christ in Flanders*. These books affected me in times past, but to read them again would be to run the risk of a great disillusion. So why read them? As I took a cigar from the box my thought returned to Paris, and I remembered that in about a year I had begun to pine for London, for the English language, English food, for my mother's house in Alfred Place. Close by it I had rented a studio, in Cromwell Mews, and Millais used to come to see me there, and Jim of course came and talked to me of his compositions; but his influence was a declining one, for in London Lewis was always by me in spirit controlling me, exciting in me a desire to be loved for myself, prompting the conviction that for a young man to go to Cremorne Gardens or the Argyle Rooms, armed with a couple of sovereigns, was merely to procure for himself a sensual gratification hardly

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on a higher level than that which schoolboys indulge in. But if he go there with only a few cab fares in his pocket he will be obliged to reconsider himself physically, and those negligences in dress which were the despair of his parents will vanish, his boots will begin to improve in shape and quality, a pin will appear in his necktie, or maybe he will wear his scarf in a ring, his shoulders will take a finer turn, and his head will be upreared above them proudly. And if he would be loved for himself he must cultivate an interesting attitude of mind, he must be able to slough himself at will (his outer skin, I should have said), and take part in wider humanity, in dreams, hopes, aspirations and ideals not strictly his own, only his through sympathy with the lives of others.

The only one who knew me in the days of the Cre-morne and Argyle Rooms is dear Edward, and it always interests me to hear him say that I began myself out of nothing, developing from the mere sponge to the vertebrate and upward. I should have liked another simile, for Nature has never interested me as much as Art, perhaps I should never have paid any attention to Nature if it hadn't been for Art. I would have preferred Edward to have said that I was at once the sculptor and the block of marble of my own destiny, and that every failure to win a mistress in the Cremorne Gardens was a chipping away of the vague material that concealed the statue. But the simile would perhaps not have been so correct, for to say that a man is at once the sculptor and the block of marble means that he is a conscious artist, and I was not that in those days; I worked unconsciously. Yes, Edward is right; I developed upward from the sponge, returning to Paris about eighteen months later a sort of minor Lewis, having not only imbibed a good deal of his mind, but even fashioned myself so closely to his likeness

that Julian, who caught sight of me on the boulevard soon after my return, thought for a moment that I was Lewis.

On arriving at the Gare du Nord, the first thing to do was to find Lewis, for without him the evening would never wear away; but the concierge told me that Monsieur Hawkins had left, and that he did not know his present address. . . . Julian took his coffee every evening at the Café Vivienne, but never came before eight; I waited till half-past, and then bethought myself of Alphonsine's. Monsieur Hawkins and Madame Alice had not dined there for some weeks. Alphonsine did not know their address; the dinner seemed worse than usual, and the chatter of the women more tedious. At last somebody said that she thought Marie Pellegrin knew Madame Alice's address, but Marie was not at Alphonsine's that evening. . . . She came in, however, a little later, and told me that Madame Alice was living in the Rue Duphot, No. 14, an *appartement au rez-de-chaussée*, and away I went. Madame was at home, but she had a gentleman dining with her.

Monsieur Hawkins.

Yes, the servant answered timidly, and I burst in.

Lewis was glad to see me, and Alice welcomed me with hard empty laughter. Was she glad to see me back again? Or did she fear that painting would distract Lewis's attention from her? However this may be, she welcomed me, and was certainly pleased at my admiration of the fine suite of apartments that I found her in. Yes, I have been going ahead, she said, leading me through the windows into a strip of garden where tall trees were trained up a high wall. She liked my question, Who is the fellow who pays for all this? and I heard the name of Phillipar for the first time, a great name it was then in the Parisian

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financial world. After going bankrupt for a dozen millions or more, he bought an island in the Mediterranean, and it was he or one of his associates that kept Alice, never coming to see her oftener than once a week, and then only in the afternoon.

So when you hear the servant whisper, *Monsieur est ici*, you'll just skip round to the café and wait.

And I shall find Lewis there, I added.

The remark did not please him, for he was trying to carry off the life he was leading with great airs; and when I went to him a few days after, seriously alarmed for his artistic future, saying that I had heard in the studio that he had not been there for months, he answered that I had a fixed income, but he had only four hundred francs a month from his mother, and it was not easy to abstract Julian's fees, one hundred francs a month, from four. He had counted upon selling the landscape which we were looking at—a flowering glade in the woods of Ville d'Avry; but the customer had been called away to South America suddenly. He would come back, but in the meantime . . . The picture was not finished; he would like to have done some more to it, but he was so hard up he could not afford the train fare; and my heart melting at the thought of so much genius wasted for the sake of a train fare, I went away with him to Ville d'Avray, and we found motives and painters in the woods, and strayed under flowering boughs, and returned with two pictures in time for dinner in the Rue Duphot, and a great deal of art talk that was continued during and after dinner till Alice said:

You two have been away all day in the woods, and have no doubt had a very pleasant time, but where do I come in? you come back here merely to talk painting, and she flounced out of the room, leaving us wondering

at her ill temper and how long she would remain away. She appeared in the doorway ten minutes after, and turning on her heel, said, I don't know what you two are going to do; I am going to the Bois. And you, Lewis, what are you going to do? I asked, and as Lewis did not dare tell her that he would prefer to spend the evening lounging in her drawing-room, we had to accompany her to the Cascade and sit with her in the café till midnight watching the celebrated courtesans arriving and departing in their carriages. So-and-so is now with So-and-so; he gives her a hundred thousand francs a year *et elle le trompe tout le temps avec le petit chose*. She was interested in these details, and not unnaturally, for she was now very nearly in the front rank, and to keep her there we had to take her out every evening. If we did not go to a theatre we went to a music-hall; the Folies Bergères was coming into fashion at that time, and we were often there till it was time to go to the Mabile. A tedious place of amusement the Mabile always was to my thinking, and the dinner that had cost over eighty francs, and the box at the Folies Bergères which had broken into a second hundred-franc note, did not cause me as many pangs of conscience as the five-franc entrance-fee. Ladies entered the Mabile free, and Alice sometimes paid for Lewis, but very often before she had time to slip five francs into his hand some friends engaged her in conversation, and then he would beseech me to lend him the money, and it angered me to see him fling the coin down with the air of *un grand seigneur*. Half an hour is the longest time that anybody remains in the garden, and as we walked round the estrade in silence, I often thought of my poor Ballintubber tenants.

I wonder how much longer Alice intends to keep me waiting?

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Sometimes she joined us, sometimes she went away with her aristocratic connections, and as we walked home Lewis would rail against her, swearing that he would never see her again, turning a deaf ear to my pleading. Now it amused me to plead for her, and to soothe him I agreed that she should not have left his arm as abruptly as she had done; but her position was a difficult one, torn between love and necessity. He would answer that he wasn't going to be made a fool of before all Paris, and it delighted me to see him put on the grand air, though if I had been Alice's *amant de cœur* I should like to have been treated frankly as a ponce, one that has to make way for the *miché qui happe le pot*, as in Villon's ballade. To be an *amant de cœur* as Lewis was, *en cachette*, would have filled me with shame, my instinct being always to be ashamed of nothing but to be ashamed, and it was from the day that Lewis confessed himself ashamed of the rôle he was playing that he lost caste in my eyes. I began to catch myself wondering how it was that he did not scruple about wasting all his life with Alice; he seemed to have abandoned painting altogether, and it was with some unwillingness that I followed them one night to a masked ball dressed in the fantastic costume of Valentine in *Le Petit Faust*. Was it at Perren's I met *la belle Hollandaise*? I think it was at Perren's, the great *cours de danse*, where on week-days young girls from the Faubourg St. Germain learnt their first steps, and on Sunday nights all the *demi-mondaines* assembled—Leonie Leblanc, Cora Pearl, Blanche d'Antigny, Margaret Byron, Hortense Schneider, Julia Baron, and how many others? It was at Perren's that I met her, and not at the commoner *bal* in the Rue Vivienne; she was sitting by Cora Pearl watching me, attracted no doubt at first by the red and yellow tights that I wore, and recognising in her eyes a quiet look of

invitation, I summoned up all my courage and crossed the ball-room to inquire if she would dance with me; which she did, passing into my arms with a delightful motion, making me feel her presence without any vulgar thrusting of her body upon me. The music ceased, and she said: You're with friends? Then my heart misgave me, and I answered: Would you like to be introduced? She said she would, and it was plain that Alice was jealous of my new friend; like myself, she believed that it could not be me, but Lewis, that she sought; but as soon as she was assured that this was not so, her attitude toward *la belle Hollandaise* became friendlier, and we four at the close of the *bal* drove to a fashionable restaurant, and afterward to the Rue Duphot, Alice proposing a grand bivouac, for she did not care to sleep in her bed while her guests slept upon the floor. But we would not accept her bed; and my heart again misgave me, thinking that the evening, like many an evening before, would prove platonic . . . for me. As if reading my thought *la belle Hollandaise* asked me at what moment in the evening I had begun to love her.

When you kissed me.

But I haven't kissed you at all yet, she said. Wait a little while. And leaning her cheek against mine, she whispered strange incomprehensible things in a low, quiet voice that drove me mad, her eyes, curious and enigmatic, fixed on me, her pointed face lifted to mine, her chin enticing, and her soft brown hair brushing my cheek. I can recall the sweet moment when she drew her bracelets from her wrists? But cannot call to mind any part of her undressing, only that she was always beside me, curled serpent-like, a serpent of old Nile, for a woman can coil like one, and during the night I often cried out in terror, awakening Lewis and Alice, who lay asleep in the rich imperial bed. . . . She must have kissed me in the morning

and gone to Alice's bathroom and dressed and done her hair, but I remember none of these things, only that we once stood before a large picture by Diaz in her house in the Avenue Victor Hugo. In those days I prefaced my love affairs with a copy of *Mademoiselle de Maupin*; I held one in my hand with a famous passage marked for her to read, and can still hear her telling me that she had been offered three hundred thousand francs to go to Russia. But if you go I shall never see you again. I don't know whether I shall go or not. I don't know what's going to happen to me, were the last words of *la belle Hollandaise*, the last words she addressed to me, and if I relate the incident of our meeting it is because we never forget her who reveals sensuality to us. She is now as old as the fair helm-maker, but on that memorable night Alice and Lewis seemed perfunctory lovers. A few evenings later he offered Alice to me, for they had outlived their love for each other, and were now seeking to maintain it in excess and orgy. Her face wore an odd smile when he proposed her to me, so the thought may have come to her rather than to him, the instinct of every woman being to turn to him who has witnessed her love as soon as she wearies of her lover. So if she had begun to weary of her lover about this time, we may acquit her of any deep plan to involve me in a quarrel with my cousin when on my coming to invite her out to dinner, she answered that she would dine with me, but she was not yet dressed and I should have to wait in the drawing-room till she had had her bath, unless indeed I did not mind following her into the *cabinet de toilette*—a proposal gladly accepted, for I did not doubt that I should discover in her a more beautiful model than any that had posed in Julian's studio, even if her breasts were too large for a nymph's. On stepping

out of her bath she dried herself in many picturesque attitudes whilst we talked of her perfections, the length of her leg from the ankle to the knee, and the spring of her hips. But of love not a word was spoken, for I was not certain that Lewis might not have hidden himself behind a curtain or between the tester and the ceiling unbeknown to her.

She would not believe me at first, he said three months later, after telling me that he had left Alice for good; she would not believe me at first, and all she could find to say to persuade me to remain was: You couldn't leave such a pretty pair of breasts! Soon after, I heard from him that the rupture was confirmed by Alice herself, who had passed him in her carriage in the *Champs Élysées*. She had looked the other way, and there was such scorn in her face that he had vowed he would prove to her that in losing her he had not lost everything. A few days after, he introduced me to a pretty blonde Swede, a woman who was well thought of, but with hardly a tithe of Alice's reputation. I never heard from Lewis why he left her, but one day a carriage drew up by the pavement on which I was walking. The glass was let down, and the Swede told me that she had been obliged to send Lewis away because she found a *voiture de remise indispensable*.

Les voitures de remise et les amants de cœur sont la ruine des femmes, she said; *comme combinaison, c'est aux pommes*. And the wisdom of this second-rate light-o'-love, begotten no doubt of many experiences, called my thoughts back to Alice, who, since she had thrown out her *amant de cœur*, was rapidly becoming one of the celebrated *demi-mondaines* in Paris. Whilst she went up in the world Lewis sank lower, attaching himself to women who could barely afford him three hundred francs a

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month, the price of a grisette in the Quartier Latin; the occasional bank-note that his mother used to send him she could afford no longer; his sister was a great expense, and he came to me one day to tell me that he had decided to earn his own living.

Vanderkirko, you know whom I mean, he said, has a small china factory, and he has agreed to take me as an apprentice. I am going to live with him in the Avenue d'Italie *près de la barrière*.

But you'll see nobody. You'll be exiled.

I am weary of the life I have been leading; and you'll come and see me sometimes, though it is a long way off.

I'll come every Sunday, I answered, and a few Sundays later I found him and Vanderkirko building a wall.

So you've come at last! and he took me into the house and showed me some of his first attempts at painting china, and interested me in the manufacture, in *la cuisson au petit et au grand feu*.

Vanderkirko was an ex-Communist, and Lewis told me how a door had opened at the last moment when the Government troops were at his heels. He had rushed through it, and through the house, and he was now married *et très rangé*, and that was why he had refused my invitation to dine and to go to Constant's afterwards. Lewis advised me that the restaurants in the quarter *n'étaient pas trop fameux*, but we could get some simple food *au coin de la rue de la Gaité*, and afterwards at Constant's he would introduce me to some very dangerous criminals, and he talked to me of the thieves he knew and the robberies they planned and were planning; he talked to me about their mistresses, exciting my imagination, for their nicknames were odd and picturesque. If he be not the lover of a great *demi-mondaine*, he likes to live among thieves and ponces, I thought; one extreme

or the other of society for him. A somewhat unreal person. But, why is one person more unreal than another? I asked myself, deciding that a man without a point of view always conveys the impression of unreality. The long street that we used to walk up together rose in my vision, and Lewis growing more confidential from lamp-post to lamp-post, telling me that it was not idleness, as I supposed, that had kept him out of Julian's studio, nor was it because he had no money to pay the fees—Julian would have let him work for nothing—but he could not accept favours from Julian. The tone of his voice in which he said this surprised me, and then becoming still more confidential he said that he could not go to Julian's studio because his sister was Julian's mistress. I don't know why I should have been so surprised, but I was surprised that such a thing should have happened and that he should have told me; and, very much concerned, I begged of him to tell me how it had all come about. Apparently in the simplest way. He had introduced her to Julian, and—my memory has dropped a stitch, something and something. He had called at her hotel, and the concierge had told him that Madame had gone away to the country, and the next time they met he asked her where she had been; she answered that she had been to the country with Julian. But you didn't come back that night. Where did you sleep? With Fatty, she had answered coolly. He did not think it right, and he did not think it wrong, that his sister should live as it pleased her; he was always *un peu veule de nature*, without a point of view; and returning from the coal-box, for the fire had sunk very low, I picked up the thread of my thoughts again. He had told me that it was on account of debts he had given up work at the studio, and I remembered that he had confessed to owing Renouf one hundred

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francs; Julian had lent him fifty, he had had a bit off Chadwick, he had borrowed from Julian's *bonne*, and it was this last debt that had convinced him that sooner or later he would have to earn his own living. And my heart warmed once more toward this handsome fellow who could take the rough with the smooth, and was as light-hearted in the Avenue d'Italie as in the Rue Duphot, and I praised him to Julian as we drank our coffee at the corner table, until one night, after listening in silence, Julian asked if it had not occurred to me that in losing Lewis Art had suffered a great loss. Lewis's defection from the studio had never struck me in quite so serious a light before, and I asked Julian if he thought that a great genius was being wasted at the Barrière d'Italie. As if he did not hear me, Julian said that casual loans of money were no use, and that it would be better for me not to see Lewis any more unless I could do something definite for him.

Why shouldn't you invite him to live with you for a year, eighteen months?—two years will be sufficient.

But I live in the Hôtel de Russie.

The proper thing for you to do is to take an *appartement*, give him a room and let him be certain of his breakfast and his dinner, and pay for his washing. His mother will send him a little pocket-money, and he can work at my studio.

But the studio fees?

Of course I couldn't take your money.

Julian had caught me, and feeling that I lacked courage to say No, and bear the blame of allowing a great genius to wither unknown down by the Barrière d'Italie, I wrote to Lewis telling him of Julian's proposal to me, and next day he came up to thank me and to assure me that he would try to justify the confidence that we placed in

him. He did not give me time to consider the wisdom of the sacrifice I was making, and very wisely, but set out at once to find an *appartement* that would suit us, coming next day to me with the joyful tidings that he had seen one in the Passage des Panoramas in the Galerie Feydeau. But I don't think I could live in the Passage des Panoramas, and I begged him to look out for another *appartement*.

But this one is on the first floor, he urged; we shan't have to go up many stairs, and we shall only have to run round the galleries to Julian's studio. That will save us getting up half an hour earlier in the morning and walking through the wet streets. We shall never see the sky nor feel the wind blowing, and I looked up at the glass roofing through which trickled a dim sordid twilight. The sky and wind are well enough out of doors, he said, but once we are within doors the more we are within the better. I have seen other *appartements*, but nothing as suitable to our convenience. You are going to work, aren't you? And if you are, nothing else matters.

It was with such specious argument that I was inveigled into my prison, and more or less feebly I agreed to forego light and air for eighteen months or two years.

V

The fire was now burning brightly, and I recalled my memories one by one till the three months we had spent in the studio became visible.

The first week my drawing was no worse than Lewis's; indeed, it was rather better, but the second week he had outstripped me, and whatever talent I had, the long hours in the studio wore it away rapidly, and one day, horrified at the black thing in front of me, I laid down my pencil:

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saying to myself, I will never take up pencil or brush again, and slunk away out of the studio home to the Galerie Feydeau to the room above the umbrella shop, to my bed, my *armoire à glace*, my half-dozen chairs; and on that bed under its green curtains I lay all night weeping, saying to myself: My life is ended and done. There is no hope for me. All I wanted was Art, and Art has been taken from me. *Je suis fichu, fichu, bien fichu*, I repeated, and the steps of the occasional passer-by echoed mournfully under the glass roofing.

The Galerie Feydeau had never seemed a cheerful place to live in; it was now as hateful to me as a prison, and Lewis was my gaoler. He went away every morning at eight o'clock, and I met him at breakfast in the little restaurant at the end of the Galerie Feydeau. After breakfast he returned to the studio, and I was free to wander about the streets or to sit in my room reading Shelley. He came home about five, and we went for a walk, and he told me what was happening in the studio. Everything that happened seemed to be for his greater honour and glory. He had won the medal and the hundred francs that Julian offered every month for the best drawing—an innovation this was to attract custom—and a little spree had to be given to commemorate his triumph. He organised the spree very well; of course it was my money that paid for it; and the best part of the studio came to the Galerie Feydeau one evening, and we sang and smoked and drank punch and played the piano. Lewis played the violin, and Julian, drawing his chair up to mine, told me that in ten years hence Lewis would be *hors concours* in the Salon, and living in a great hotel in the Champs-Élysées painting pictures at thirty thousand francs apiece. *Les grandes tartines* we used to call the pictures that went to the Salon, or *les grande machines*: I am forgetting my

studio slang. Julian had a difficult part to play. If he were to depreciate Lewis's talent I might throw up the sponge and go away; he thought it safer to assure me that my sacrifices were not made in vain; but man is such a selfish and jealous animal that it had begun to seem to me I would prefer a great failure for Lewis to a great success. Not a great failure, I said to myself; for if he fail I shall never get rid of him. There will be no escape from the Galerie Feydeau for me, so I must hope for his success. He will leave me when he begins to make money. When will that be? and the cruel thought crossed my mind that he was laughing at me all the while, looking upon me as the springboard wherefrom he would jump into a great Salon success. It seemed to me that I could see us both in the years ahead—myself humble and obscure, he great and glorious, looking down upon me somewhat kindly, as the lion looks upon the mouse that has gnawed the cords that bound him. I think I was as unhappy in the Galerie Feydeau as I had been in Oscott College. I seemed to have lost everybody in the world except the one person I wished to lose, Lewis. I was a stranger in the studio, where I went seldom, for every one there knew of my failure; even the models I feared to invite to my rooms lest they should tell tales afterwards. At last the thought came of my sister's school friend, and at her home I met people who knew nothing of Julian and L'École des Beaux-Arts, and at a public dinner I was introduced to John O'Leary and his Parisian circle, and all these people were interested in me on account of my father. One can always pick one's way into Society, and three months later I was moving in American and English Society about the Place Wagram and the Boulevard Malesherbe, returning home in the early morning, awaking Lewis frequently to describe the party to him, awaking him one morning to

tell him that a lady whose boots I was buttoning in the vestibule had leaned over me and whispered that I could go to the very top button . . . if I liked. A very pretty answer it had seemed to Lewis, and it was clear that he was affected by it, though he resisted for a long time my efforts to persuade him to allow me to introduce him to my friends. I had intended only an outing, an exhibition of my cousin, after which he was to return to his kennel. But I had interrupted his life, and fatally; invitations came to him from every side; he accepted them all, and we started to learn the Boston before the *armoire à glace*. He learnt it quicker than I did, and when he returned from Barbizon, whither he had gone to meet the wife of an American millionaire, I told him I could live no longer in the Galerie Feydeau and was going away to Boulogne to meet some people whom I had met at Madame Ratazzi's, into whose circle I had happily not introduced him, and wishing to take him down a peg I mentioned that I had acted with her in *La Dame aux Camélias*. He flew into a violent rage. I was going away with swagger friends to enjoy myself, careless whether he ate or starved. He was right from his point of view. I was breaking my promise to him. But is there anybody who would be able to say he would not have broken his in the same circumstances? None! It was at once a shameful and a natural act; he was my friend; it was shameful, it was horrible, but there are shameful and horrible things in other lives beside mine. His presence had become unendurable. But why excuse myself further? Let the facts speak for themselves and let me be judged by them. They have already been published in *The Confessions of a Young Man*, but I wonder now if I told in that book enough of the surprise that I experienced on finding him still in the *appartement* in

the Galerie Feydeau when I returned from Boulogne? He should have moved out of my rooms after the quarrel, but instead of that he had converted the sitting-room into a workshop, and his designs for lace curtains occupied one entire wall. He'll go to-morrow, of course, I said, but he did not go on the morrow or the day after, and at the end of the week he was still there, and annoying me by whistling as he worked on his design. At last, unable to bear it any longer, I opened the door of my bedroom and begged him to cease, and it is to this day a marvel to me how he restrained himself from strangling me. He looked as if he were going to rush at me, and on the threshold of my room indulged in the most fearful vituperation and abuse, to which I felt it would be wiser not to attempt an answer, for his arms were long and his fists were heavy; he was always talking about striking out, and it is foolish to engage in a combat when one knows one is going to get the worst of it, so I just let him shout on until he retired to his lace curtains, and I resolved to give notice.

He can't stay after quarter-day.

But the quarter was a long way off, and every day I met him in the Passage des Panoramas among my friends, flowing away in a new ulster past the jet ornaments and the fans; a splendid fellow he certainly was with his broken nose and his grand eyes, and the ulster suited him so well that I began to regret a quarrel which prevented me from asking him questions about it. He came and went as he pleased, passing me on the staircase and in the rooms, his splendid indifference compelling the conclusion that however lacking in character a reconciliation would prove me to be, I could no longer forego one, and after many hesitations I called after him and begged that he would allow bygones to be bygones. I think that

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he said this was impossible; he must have been counting on my weakness; however this may be, he played with me very prettily, forcing me to plead, practically to ask his forgiveness, and when we were friends again he related that he was looking out for a studio, and in the effusion of reconciliation I very foolishly asked him to tell me if he should happen upon an *appartement* that he thought would suit me, for live another quarter in the Galerie Feydeau I couldn't. He promised that he would not fail to keep his eyes open, and a few days after he mentioned that he had seen a charming *appartement* in the Rue de la Tour des Dames—the very thing that would suit me. As there was not nearly enough furniture in the Galerie Feydeau to fill it, he entered into negotiations with an upholsterer, and dazzled me with a scheme of decoration which would cost very little to carry out, and which would give me as pretty an *appartement* as any in Paris. He was kind enough to relieve me of all the details of *un déménagement*, and what could I do in return but invite him to stay with me until he had painted a picture?

We had a friend at that time who painted little naked women very badly and sold them very well, and it occurred to Lewis that if Faléro could sell his pictures there was no reason why he should not, so he borrowed a hundred francs from me to hire a model, and painted a nymph; but though better drawn than Faléro's nymphs, she went the round, from picture-dealer to picture-dealer, never finding a purchaser, which did not matter much, for Lewis began at this time to please a rich widow who lived in Rue Jean Goujon. She was not, however, very generous, refusing always *de le mettre dans ses meubles*, and he continued to live with me, wearing my hats and neckties, borrowing small sums of money, and what was still more annoying, beginning to cultivate a taste for literature, dar-

ing even to seek literary advice and help from Bernard de Lopez, a Parisian despite his name—Parisian in this much, that he had written a hundred French plays, all in collaboration with the great men of letters of his time, including Dumas, Banville, and Gautier.

I had picked him up in the Hôtel de Russie very soon after my arrival in Paris. He dined there every Monday, an old habit (the origin of this habit he never told me, or I have forgotten)—a strange habit, it seemed, for anything less literary than the Hôtel de Russie . . . for the matter of that anything less literary than Bernard de Lopez's appearance it is impossible to imagine: two piggy little eyes set on either side of a large, well-shaped nose; two little stunted legs that toddled quickly forward to meet me, and two little warm, fat hands that often held mine too long for comfort. So small a man never had before so large a head, a great bald head with a ring of hair round it, and his chin was difficult to discover under his moustaches; roll after roll of flesh descended into his bosom, and, by God! I can still see in my thoughts his little brown eyes watching me just like a pig, suspiciously, though why he should have been suspicious of me I cannot say, unless, indeed, he suspected that I doubted the existence of the plays he said he had written in collaboration, a thing which I frequently did, unjustly, for he was telling the truth. He had collaborated with Gautier, Dumas, and Banville, and having assured myself of this by the *Brochures*, I began to think that he could not have been always so trite and commonplace.

Men decline like the day, and he was in the evening of his life when I met him, garrulous about the days gone by, and in the Café Madrid, whither I invited him to come with me after dinner at the Hôtel de Russie, he told me that Scribe had always said he would like to rewrite

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La Dame Blanche. Rewrite a piece that has been acted a thousand times, Lopez would gurgle, and then he told me about *la scène à faire*. The morning he had brought Dumas the manuscript of *Le Fils de la Nuit* he had said to him: *Nous aurons des larmes*. He used to speak about a writer called Saint-George, whose rooms were always heavily scented, and scent gave the little man *des maux de tête*. There was another man whose name I cannot recall, with whom he had written many plays, and who had an engagement book like a doctor or a dentist, *qui ne l'empêche pas d'avoir beaucoup d'esprit*. It pleases me to recall Lopez's very words: they bring back the 'seventies to me, and my own thoughts of the 'seventies and the intellectual atmosphere in which these men lived, going about their business with comedies and plays in their heads—an appointment at ten to consider the first act of a vaudeville; after breakfast another appointment, perhaps at the other end of Paris, to discover a plot for a drama; a talk about an opera in the café at five, and perhaps somebody would call in the evening—no—not in the evening, for they wrote on into the night, tumbling into bed at three or four in the morning.

Of the wonderful 'seventies Lopez was *le dernier rejeton*; and talking about *Le Fils de la Nuit*, the first play that had ever run two hundred nights, we strolled back to his lodging in the Place Pigalle—a large room on the second floor overlooking the Place with a *cabinet de toilette*. And as time went on I learnt some facts about him. He had been married, and received from his wife the few thousand francs a year on which he lived, and the Empire bed with chairs and a toilet-table to match must have come from her; he would not have thought of buying them, and still less the two portraits by Angelica Kauffmann on either side of the fireplace. A man who had

outlived his day! a superficial phrase, for none can say when a man has outlived his day. He had not outlived his when the managers ceased to produce his plays, for he drew my attention to literature, and it is pleasant to me to remember the day that I hurried down to Galigani's to buy a play, for one evening while we talked in the Café Madrid it had occurred to me that with a little arrangement Lewis and Alice would supply me with the subject of a comedy. But never having read a play I did not know how one looked upon paper. Congreve, Wycherley, Farquhar, and Vanbrugh (Leigh Hunt's edition) were my first dramatic authors, and my first comedy, in imitation of these writers, was composed and written and copied out and read to Bernard de Lopez within six weeks of its inception. His criticism of it was, I thought at first we were going to have a very strong play, a man that marries his mistress to his friend, and I understood at once that the subject had been frittered away in endless dialogue after the manner of my exemplars, and it was as likely as not in the hope of getting all this dialogue acted that I returned to England, remaining there some time, writing a long comedy which Lopez did not like. Drama was abandoned for poetry, and Lopez encouraged me to tell him of my poems, advising me as we ascended the Rue Notre Dame de Lorette or the Rues des Martyrs to choose subjects that would astonish the British public by their originality—for instance, if instead of inditing a sonnet to my mistress's eyebrows I were to tell the passion of a toad for a rose.

Not that, of course not that, but poems on violent subjects.

A young man's love for a beautiful corpse, I interjected.

He introduced French poetry to me, and through him

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I read a great deal that I might not have heard of, and wrote a great deal that I might never have written; and it was to him that I brought my first copy of my first book, *Flowers of Passion*, together with an article that had appeared in *The World*, entitled, A Bestial Bard. The article began: The author of these poems should be whipped at the cart's tail, while the book is being burnt in the market-place by the common hangman. It filled the greater part of a column, and the note struck by Edmund Yates was taken up by other critics, and, much impressed by the violence of their language, Lopez said: They seem to have exhausted the vocabulary of abuse upon you, and he began to sound me regarding the possibility of an English and a French author writing a play together for the English stage. Martin Luther seemed to us a character that would suit Irving, then at the height of his fame.

But shall we present both sides of the question impartially like Goethe? Or shall we write as ardent Protestants?

As ardent Protestants, I answered. Lopez acquiesced, and one day when I called to discuss a certain scene between Catherine Bora and Luther with my collaborator, I came upon Lewis reading a sonnet to him. Always thrusting himself into my life! are words that will let the reader into the secret of my annoyance. He rose abashed, and the sight of Lewis abashed was a novel one. Lopez continued to explain:

Mon cher monsieur, ce n'est pas pour vous contrarier, mais 'd'où suintent d'étranges pleurs' est un vers de sept; suintent n'a que deux syllabes.

C'est ma mauvaise prononciation flamande, Lewis said, and he bundled up his papers, adding: You have come to talk Martin Luther, so I'll leave you.

By what right does he come interrupting you?

He only came to show me a sonnet.

But what the devil does he want to write sonnets for? Isn't it enough that he should paint bad pictures?

He merely came to inquire out the prosody of a certain line, Lopez answered, and he tried to calm me.

No, there's no use, Lopez. I can't fix my thoughts. Perhaps after dinner. What do you say to the Rat Mort?

He raised no objection to the Rat Mort, but the moment we entered the café he rushed up to a dishevelled and wild-eyed fellow. I thought I had lost him. Let me introduce you, he said, to Villiers de l'Isle Adam. Lewis was forgotten in the excitement of dining with a real man of letters, in the pleasure of confiding to Villiers the scene that I had come to talk to Lopez about.

It is to see Martin Luther himself, I said, whom she has never seen, that she confesses in a wood her love of Martin Luther.

I must introduce you to Mallarmé, said Villiers, and he wrote a note on the edge of the table. You'll find him at home on Tuesday evenings.

Mallarmé spoke to me of Manet, and he must have spoken to Manet about me, for one night in the Nouvelle Athènes Manet asked me if the conversation distracted my attention from my proofs. Come and see me in my studio in the Rue d'Amsterdam. And not very many evenings later Mendès was introduced to me between one and two in the morning. He asked me to the Rue Mansard, where he lived with Mademoiselle Holmès, whereupon, before I had time to realise the fact, I was launched on Parisian literary and artistic society, and six months afterwards Manet said to me, There is no Frenchman in England who occupies the position you do in Paris. Perhaps there isn't, I answered mechanically, my thoughts turning to

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Lewis, who was certainly going down in the world. I should have done better to have left him in the Mont Rouge to get his living as a workman, for he'll never be able to scrape together any sort of living as a painter, and my spirits rose mountains high against him. An old man from the sea, I said, whom I cannot shake off.

But the courage to fling him into the street was lacking, and I continued to bear with him day after day, hoping that he would leave me of his own accord. He was well enough in Julian's studio or in the Beaux Arts or in English and American society, but he would seem shallow and superficial in the Nouvelle Athènes, and I always avoided taking him there; but one night he asked me to tell him where I was dining, and I had to tell him at the Nouvelle Athènes. He pleaded to be allowed to accompany me, and I will admit to some vanity on my part; or was it curiosity that prompted me to introduce him to Degas, who very graciously invited us to sit at his table and talked to us of his art, addressing himself as often to Lewis as he did to me. He opened his whole mind to us, beguiled by Lewis's excellent listening, until the waiter brought him a dish of almonds and raisins. Then a lull came, and Lewis said, leaning across the table:

I think, Monsieur Degas, you will agree with me that, more than any other artist among us, Jules Lefebvre sums up all the qualities that an artist should possess.

I thought I should have died of shame, and Degas's laughter did not console me, nor his words whispered in my ear as he left:

Votre ami est très fort. . . . Il m'a fait monter l'échelle comme personne. And a few days afterwards in the Rue Pigalle he said:

Comment va votre ami? Ah! celui-là est d'une force. Mais, cher ami, le pauvre garçon n'a jamais su se dégager——

Pas du tout; il est très fort.

Son esprit n'a jamais su dépasser certaines bornes . . . la Rue Bonaparte.

But no explanation pleased Degas as much as his own: *Il m'a tiré les vers du nez . . . et comme personne.* I resisted this explanation till, feeling that I was beginning to show myself in a stupid light, I accepted it outwardly, though convinced inly that Lewis had been guilty of the unpardonable sin—lack of comprehension. He must go and at once, and as soon as I returned home I begged him to leave me. At the end of the month, when my mother sends me money, he answered, and my heart sank at the thought of having him with me so long. I think I must have answered, For God's sake go! and a few days afterwards the concierge mentioned to my great surprise that Monsieur Hawkins had left, and had paid her the few francs he owed her. A good trait on his part, I thought, and my heart softened toward him suddenly, and continued soft until a lady told me that Monsieur Hawkins had been to see her and had borrowed a hundred francs from her.

I didn't dare refuse, she said, but I thought it rather mean of him to come to ask me for the money.

We sat looking at each other, the lady thinking no doubt that I should not have told Lewis I was her lover, and myself thinking that I had at length caught Lewis in deliberate blackmail; and, going round to the studio in which he had settled himself, I said, before looking round the walls to admire the sketches:

I have just come from Miss——, and she tells me you borrowed a hundred francs from her.

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If I did, you borrowed from Alice Howard, my mistress, he answered.

I had forgotten, and sat dumbfounded. But why had I borrowed this money? I never wanted for money. Perhaps to put Alice to the test, or to get back some of my own, for she had borrowed often from me, and finding her in affluent circumstances. . . . She asked me some days after to repay her, and I gave her the money that was in my pockets—a hundred francs; the other hundred I forgot all about until one evening at Alphonsine's I saw her rise up from her place and walk toward me, a vindictive look round her mouth and eyes.

Have you come, she said, to pay me the money that you owe me?

To admit that I had borrowed money from Alice at Alphonsine's was impossible; lies happen very seldom in my life, but they have happened, and this was an occasion when a lie was necessary. But I lied badly from lack of habit, and Lewis had heard from the women there that I had not stood up to Alice; and now to pass off the matter on which I had come to speak to him, I asked him how I should have answered Alice.

You should have answered her ironically: *Toi, tu m'as prêté de l'argent? Où ça? Quand tu venais me trouver à l'hôtel de toutes les Russies et que tu pleurais pour un déjeuner? Quand tu n'avais pas deux mètres d'indienne à te coller sur les fesses? Non, mais vrai: y avait-il une maquerelle rue de Provence qui voulait de ta peau? Tu dis que tu m'as prêté de l'argent? C'est-il quand ton tôle te reprenait ta clé tous les matins, ou quand tu demandais aux michés cinquante centimes pour aller aux chiottes?*

Splendid! I cried.

Faut pas se laisser marcher sur le pied, dis. Je ne lui aurais pas parlé autrement.

You have *l'esprit prime-sautier*, but any wit I have is *l'esprit de l'escalier . . . et de la dernière marche*.

Je ne lui aurais pas parlé autrement.

Patter always excites my admiration; we get back to origins—to the monkey. And looking round the studio the number of sketches that I saw everywhere in oil and water-colour put the thought into my mind that Lewis must have discovered a patron and was living as comfortably as he had ever done with me. So all my sacrifices were in vain, I said to myself, and aloud to him: You are doing a great deal of work. I have discovered a patron, he answered, and he told me of an old man living in a barred house in a distant suburb who never opened his door except to a certain ring—an old man in gold-rimmed spectacles who would buy any drawing that Lewis brought him at a price: thirty francs for a flower in a vase, for an apple, a pear, for a street corner, for a head sketched in ten minutes. He is your banker? I said. Yes; it's just like cashing a cheque. And I left the studio hoping that the old man who looked at Lewis's drawings through gold-rimmed spectacles would live for many a year. His death would certainly bring back Lewis to me asking for fifty, for a hundred francs; and if I could not lend him so much he would ask for twenty, and if I could not manage twenty he would ask for ten, and if I could not manage ten he would ask for five, perhaps coming down to the price of his omnibus home. But the old man continued in the flesh, and weeks and months passed away without my seeing or hearing from Lewis. Years must have gone by before we met at Barbizon, whither he had gone intent upon investing all his savings on a Salon picture.

An old graveyard full of the lush of June had taken his fancy, and after many sketches he was still certain that he had hit on a good subject for a picture. A critic

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pointed out that two children looking at a gravestone would balance the composition; another said that a yellow cat coming from the cottages along the wall would complete it. Both were right; all that now remained for Lewis to do was to paint the picture. But he lacked touch, and his picture would have remained very tinny if Stott of Oldham had not arrived at Barbizon suddenly.

You mustn't rub the paint like that. See here; and taking the brush from Lewis's hand he mixed a tone and drew the brush slowly from right to left. Almost at once the paint began to look less like tin, and Lewis said, I think I understand, and he was able to imitate Stott sufficiently well to produce a picture which Bouguereau said would attract attention in the Salon if the title were changed to *Les Deux Orphelins*.

L'Amour renaît de ses Cendres is not a title that will appeal to the general public.

Lewis tried to explain that what he meant was that the love of the parents is born again in their children; but he allowed Bouguereau's good sense to prevail, and the picture drew from Albert Wolff an enthusiastic notice of nearly half a column in the *Figaro*, after which it became the fashion to go to the Salon to see *Les Deux Orphelins* and Monsieur Hawkins, *un jeune peintre anglais de beaucoup de talent*, for Lewis could not separate himself from his picture, and every day he grew bolder, receiving his friends in front of it and explaining to them, and to all and sundry, the second title, *L'Amour renaît de ses Cendres*. His conduct was not very dignified, but he had been waiting so long for recognition of his talent that he could not restrain himself. He sold *Les Orphelins* for ten thousand francs, and next year the Salon was filled with imitations of it, and there was a moment when it seemed that Julian's prophecy was going to come true.

The hotel in the Champs-Élysées was being sought for when Lewis's first patron, the old man to whom he had sold his sketches for twenty-five or thirty francs apiece, died suddenly; and for nearly two years Welden Hawkinses were being knocked down at the Hôtel de Vente for fifty and a hundred francs apiece.

Fifteen hundred or two thousand pictures thrown upon the market was no doubt a misfortune, I said as I stirred the fire, but if Lewis had been a man of healthy talent he would have painted other pictures. But his talent was the talent of *un détraqué*, and a recollection of a naked man looking at a naked woman through a mask was remembered. The hereditary taint was always there, I said, and I began to turn over in my mind all that Lewis had told me about his father. My father left mamma some three or four years after their marriage. I think I was twenty before I ever saw him. I was given an address of a lodging-house in St. James's, and found my father in a small back room, sitting on a bed playing the flute. Oh, is that you, Lewis? Just a moment. Lewis had heard from his mother many stories of his father's eccentricities, and he had an opportunity of verifying these in St. James's Street, for when the older Hawkins laid aside his flute and engaged in perfunctory conversation with his son he allowed a fly to crawl over his face. Every moment Lewis expected his father to brush the insect away. It had been round one eye several times, and had descended the nose, and was about to go up the eye once again when Lewis, who could contain himself no longer, cried out:

Father, that fly!

Pray don't disturb it, I like the sensation.

My thoughts passed from Lewis to Jim, and I sat for a long time asking myself if Jim would have succeeded

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better than Lewis if he had gone to Paris in the 'fifties. He had more talent than Lewis, but his talent seemed still less capable of cultivation. There is a lot of talent in Ireland, but whether any of it is capable of cultivation is a question one can ponder for days, and my thoughts breaking away suddenly I remembered how, soon after my return from Ireland when I had settled in Cecil Street in the Strand, and was trying to make my living by writing for the papers, the desire to see Jim again in the old studio in Prince's Gardens had come upon me, and I had gone away one night in a cab to Kensington; but the appearance of the footman who opened the door surprised me, and I asked myself if Jim had sold some pictures, or had let the house. He had sold the house, and any letters that came for him were sent to Arthur's Club, where I could obtain news of him. The porter told me that any letter would be forwarded, but I wanted to see Jim that very night, and addressing myself to the secretary of the club, who happened to be passing through the hall at that moment, I begged of him to authorise the porter to give me Mr. Browne's address, which he did: and I went away in the cab certain that the end of the drive would bring me face to face with my old boon companion. The cab turned out of Baker Street and we were soon in Park Road driving between Regents Park and a high wall with doors let into it. Before one of these the hansom stopped and I saw a two-storied house standing in the midst of a square plot. A maid-servant took me up a paved pathway, mentioning that Mr. Browne was on the drawing-room floor, and I found him waiting expectant in his smock, a palette and a sheaf of brushes in his left hand, the thumb of his right hand in his leather belt.

My dear Jim, I've been to Prince's Gardens.

We've sold the house and Pinkie and Ada have gone to live with friends and relations.

There was a feeling in the room that nobody had called to see him for many a month, and I noticed that a good deal of colour had died out of the thick locks of flaxen hair and that his throat was wrinkled.

And all your pictures, Jim?

Your mother was kind enough to hang them up in Alfred Place when we left the Prince's Gardens, and when she left the house at the end of her lease the pictures were taken away.

And you didn't make any inquiries?

Well, you see, I haven't room here for many canvases.

The moment had come when I must show some interest in his pictures, and turning from the one on the easel I picked one out of the rows, hoping that the design might inspire a few words of praise.

You must have painted a dozen or twenty times upon it. I don't know how you can work over such a surface, a thick coagulated scum. Why don't you scrape? Manet always scrapes before painting, and he never loses the freshness; his paint is like cream after twenty repaintings.

Jim did not know anything about Manet, nor did he care to hear about Monet, Sisley, Renoir, the Nouvelle Athènes and its litterati. He knew nothing of Banville's versification and had not read Goncourt's novels, so I told him that Catulle had thought well of my French sonnet, for having written a drama on the subject of Luther it was necessary to write a French dedicatory sonnet, and I recited it to Jim to revenge myself upon him for his having told me that he knew French as well as English.

My landlady's daughter, he said, pointing to a small portrait on the wall, and some time afterwards a young

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girl was heard singing on the stairs. There she is. Shall I ask her in?

I begged of him to do so, and a somewhat pretty girl with round eyes and a vivacious voice, came into the room and chattered with us; but her interest in the fact that Jim was my cousin was a little high-pitched, and it was obvious that she took no interest in his pictures, or indeed in any pictures; and it was a relief when she turned to Jim to ask him if he was staying to dinner.

Let us go out together and dine somewhere, I said.

Yes, ask him out to dinner. It will do him good. He hasn't been beyond the garden for weeks.

Yes, Jim; we will go up town and dine together.

I have no money.

But father will lend you any money you want. It will go down in the . . . you can settle with father when you like.

She left the room and Jim spoke of the people in whose house he was lodging, a dancing master and his wife, and he gave me a mildly sarcastic account of Mrs. —— coming up to see him in the morning to tell him that he might have the use of the parlour for ten shillings extra; my ears retain his voice still saying something about coals and gas not being included, and what tickled his fancy was the way the old lady used to linger about the drawing-room trying to draw the conversation on to his sisters, where was Miss Ada living now, and was Miss Pinkie still living with Lady Shaftesbury? He continued talking, moving the canvases about, and I was willing to appreciate the designs if he would only say that he would come out to dinner. At last he said:

You see, I haven't been to my tailor's for a long time, and my wardrobe is in a ragged and stained condition. I dare say they'll be able to find some cold beef or cold

mutton or a sausage or two in the larder. You don't mind?

Of course I did not mind. It was for a talk about old times that I had come, and after the cold meats we returned to the drawing-room. Jim showed me all his latest designs and we discussed them together, mingling our memories of the women we had known. The names of Alice Harford, Annie Temple, and Mademoiselle d'Anka came into the conversation; I told him about Alice Howard, hoping he would ask me if she were as big as Alice Harford, and then, determined to rouse him, I said the great love affair of my life was a small, thin woman. Still he did not answer.

If a woman be sensual——

Beauty is better than bumping, he answered with a laugh, and it seemed that we were to have one of our erstwhile conversations about Art and that Jim would draw forth a canvas and say, This has all the beauties of Raphael and other beauties besides; but he seemed to have lost nearly all his interest in painting, allowing me, however, to search round the room and discover behind the sofa a new version of *Cain Shielding his Wife from Wild Beasts*, and I spoke of the design and the conception and the movement of the man about to hurl a spear at a great lion approaching from behind a rock. He took up his palette but forgot to roar like a lion, and when he laid it aside he did not sing *Il balen* or *A che la morte*, nor did he tell me that Pinkie had a more beautiful voice than Jenny Lind, and when we walked across the garden and he bade me good-bye at the gate, I felt that he had worn out himself as well as his clothes—his hopes, his talent, his enthusiasm for life, all were gone, an echo remained, an echo which I did not try to reawaken. I never saw him again; he was for me but an occasional thought, until one

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day. I found myself sitting next a showily dressed woman at luncheon, the daughter of Jim's landlady, and it was from her I learnt that Jim had died about two years back in Park Road. She said he had become quite a hermit in the later years of his life, never leaving the house except for a stroll round the garden.

Painting always, I said.

A perplexed look came into her face which I attributed to the fact that she did not know whether the pictures were works of art or nothing at all, and I asked myself suddenly what Jim's death might have been, for a man so individual as Jim should die an individual death. But my imagination did not succeed in conjuring up any worthy death for him. Perhaps Turgenev might have failed too, though indeed Jim's death is very like a Turgenev death, only a little more wonderful. Nature often invents better than we, better even than Turgenev, who would have seen that Jim must be killed by a lion; but even Turgenev could not have seen how this could be managed without sending him out to Africa to hunt lions, which would be an invention only one degree more stupid than the supposition that the keeper had left one of the lion's cages open in the Zoological Gardens, and that the animal had escaped and climbed over the wall of Park Road, killing Jim, after tearing a hole through a large canvas of *Cain Shielding his Wife from Wild Beasts*, behind which the painter had hidden himself. Turgenev would not have thought of a snow lion, but Nature did, and one day when the snow was lying several feet deep round the house, she inspired Jim to make good his theory that a lion always lies with one paw tucked under him, never with the fore-paws stretched out like Landseer's lions in Trafalgar Square. He had always been saying that this was so, but his landlord and landlady did not wish him to start

sculpture in the house. But now there was snow at the very door, and he began to pile it up, and when all the snow in the garden was exhausted the neighbours sent their snow in wheelbarrows and he continued to pile up hundredweight upon hundredweight until his lion assumed almost Egyptian proportions, rising above the surrounding walls, attracting the eyes of the hansom cabmen who drew up their horses to admire and to suggest that the lion should be sent to the British Museum. Perhaps the Governor might have a refrigerator built for him, was a remark which caused some amusement to the dancing master, his wife and daughter, and to Jim. But it was not thought worth while writing to the Governor of the Museum on the subject. The suggestion, Why don't you 'ave him photographed? coming next day from the top an omnibus seemed more practical, and the maid-servant was asked to run round to the photographer, and the evening was spent counting the number of copies that would be required; each neighbour who had sent his snow must get one, and before bedtime it was noticed that the brightness of the stars predicted a fine day. But during the night clouds gathered, and in the morning the garden was enveloped in a white mist. A messenger came from the photographer to say he could do nothing that day, and the following day he failed to keep his appointment, and in a drizzle of rain Jim set to work to patch up his melting masterpiece. The next day the photographer arrived and got what he hoped would prove a very good impression; but everybody wanted a half-plate; and Jim worked on among the wet snow, Florence begging of him to put on an overcoat and a stronger pair of boots. But he tramped about in shoes, and next day he was crouching over the fire, and when the doctor heard the story of the lion he threw up his hands.

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How a man of his age could be foolish enough to risk his life for such nonsense! And you tell me he always goes out without an overcoat? I'll call to-morrow and give him oxygen if required.

The thaw continued during the night, and Jim and his lion dissolved together. My first friend, I muttered, the springboard from whence I jumped into life and Art. And going to my Monet, I asked myself if Jim would have been able to discern better than *Æ* the beauty of the evanescent willows rising out of and vanishing into the mist. He was a clever man, and knew a great deal more than anybody gave him credit for knowing. He talked nonsense about his own genius, but he knew he was talking nonsense, and his nonsense helped him to disguise his failure from himself for a moment. He should have been born in Venice about the year 1680; his talent would have come to fruition in those years, and Van Dyke would have painted his portrait. Just then the servant opened the door to ask me if I were at home to Mr. Hugh Lane.

Yes.

And a moment after there came into the room a tall, thin young man, talking so fast that I gathered with difficulty that there must be a great many pictures in Irish country houses which he would like to exhibit in Dublin.

If anybody cares for pictures, I contrived to interject, and he sat twisting and untwisting his legs, linking and unlinking his hands, his talk beginning to bore me a little, for I could not detect any aestheticism in him, only a nervous desire to run a show. Your brother, I said, called here a few days ago to prepare me for your visit. He said that you were going to revive Irish painting. I came here to revive the Irish language; it existed once upon a time, but Irish painting——

Lane interrupted me, admitting that the men who had painted in Ireland at the end of the eighteenth century were merely reflections of Sir Joshua and Romney.

But your brother——

Without noticing my interruption he continued telling me that, for the last fortnight, he had been travelling through Ireland, visiting all the country houses, and had obtained promises from many people to lend their pictures.

Now, your name among the list of patrons at the exhibition——

But why are you giving yourself all this trouble? What is your object?

Well, you see, I am Lady Gregory's nephew, and must be doing something for Ireland.

Striking a blow, I said.

A bewildered look, quickly repressed, however, revealed to me that he did not understand my remark. You don't speak with a brogue. Your brother said you didn't. How is that?

He produced his little hysterical laugh, and without stopping to explain why it was that he had no brogue, looked round the room in search of pictures worth borrowing, and having decided upon two, a portrait of Rachel by Couture and a small Constable, he said he hoped I would try to influence Sir Thornley Stoker in his favour; he would like to print Sir Thornley's name among the patrons of the forthcoming exhibition, an exhibition designed for the advancement of Art in Ireland. I gave Lane my promise that he should be invited to the palace, our nickname for Sir Thornley's house, so full was it of beautiful things. But Sir Thornley could not be persuaded, and my affection for him was strained to the uttermost by his persistent speaking of Lane as a London picture-dealer who had come to Ireland to see what he could pick up.

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Or perhaps he's on the look-out for a post in the Museum.

I have told you, Sir Thornley, that he is Lady Gregory's nephew, and would like to do something for Ireland. That should be sufficient. He growled and muttered that Lane might tell us he was a great expert, but what proof had we of it? And the old doctor grew as grumpy as if I had been speaking of a bone-setter. My dear Thornley, we do not learn anything that we did not know before; and I sketched out the life-history of a chef who before discovering his vocation had wandered from one trade to another, trying all, until one night in the kitchen two ducks were roasting before the fire, the gravy running out of their backsides, and deeply moved, he had stood immersed in a great joy.

But what has that got to do with Lane?

Lane is Lady Gregory's nephew.

You have told me that before; you have said that before.

Of course, if you interrupt me. I was going to tell you that Lady Gregory told me herself that the family had thought of all kinds of professions suitable for Hugh, but his heart was not in any of them, and they were beginning to feel a little anxious, when one day, as they were sitting down to lunch——

Was there a duck for luncheon?

No. He caught sight of the fold of Lady Gregory's dress, a tailor-made from Paris; it is always a pleasure to a woman to hear her gown admired; but there was a seriousness in Hugh's appreciation of the hang of the skirt, and a studied regard in his eyes which caused her a moment's perplexity, and when they rose from table he stood watching her as she crossed the room. Of course, the skirt fitted rather nicely, but . . . In the same after-

noon she had occasion to go to her bedroom, and to her surprise found her wardrobe open and Hugh trying on her skirts before the glass. Hugh! Doesn't it seem to you, Aunt Augusta, that this skirt is a little too full? During the evening he spoke of some premises in Conduit Street; but tailoring was only a passing thought, and the next thing they heard of Hugh was that he had gone into Colnaghi's shop to learn the business of picture-dealing.

Nature is always unexpected, Thornley, bounding about like a monkey, and it may be that Lane sprang from tailor-mades right into Salvator Rosa, and up again to Giorgione and Titian. But if I had to choose Lane as the hero of a novel or play, I should proceed more regularly, a transition would be necessary, a little shop in St. James's, down some court long ago swept away by an enterprising builder. In my novel there certainly would be a little shop with a window full of old fans and bits of silver, just the kind of a shop that you would hang about every afternoon when you came back from the hospital, and I should place Lane in a little den out of which he would come to show you some paste—old paste. I have it, Thornley; cameos and old paste would be the steps whereby Lane mounted from tailor-mades to Salvator Rosa and then on to—whom did I say, Thornley?

Giorgione, the old doctor muttered, laughing in his beard. Two years is long enough. I was five years walking the hospitals.

It was long enough for Lane. When he left Colnaghi's shop and took a lodging in Bury Street, he was able to buy and sell pictures so successfully that in two years he had put together, I think he told me, ten thousand pounds.

Yet you say he is not a dealer; and the old doctor continued to growl by the fireside.

He is a collector who weeds out his collection. Let us call him a weeder; and let us never speak of the lavatory but of the cloak-room or the toilet-room. And let us avoid the word lodger, for he is extinct, or, like the phoenix, he has risen from his ashes and become a paying-guest. Petticoat-bodice is taboo; and bodice—even bodice—one of the beautifullest words in the language, has yielded to the detestable corsage; and the journalist speaks of a woman as *petite*, thinking that *petite* suggests refinement. Naked is a word that nobody of taste would think of using—unclothed or undraped; no reasonable man or woman would object to meeting this sentence in a novel: I would give all my worldly wealth to see Venus walk undraped from her bath; the novelist might even write: I would give all my worldly wealth to see Elizabeth Hawkins walk undraped from her bath; but if he were to write: I would give all my worldly wealth to see Elizabeth Hawkins walk naked from her bath, he would be dubbed a very gross writer by the newspapers, though it is difficult to say how morality gains by the substitution of unclothed or undraped for naked, and easy to see that literature dies in these substitutions. Who would ever think of asking a lady for the bill-of-fare? Even in the second-class restaurants the word bill-of-fare has been dropped, we read now the menu. So you see, Lane is quite in the fashion when he calls himself a collector. If you would only meet him you would be converted, not to euphuisms, but to Lane. He has got such pretty ways. When you ask him if he is going to sell a picture he will say: Don't talk to me about selling; I can't bear to part with my pictures. One of these days I shall have a house and shall want pictures; and immediately the conversation will slide away, and you'll find yourself listening to a long tale of a collection of pictures which he intends

to present at cost price to some provincial gallery. He is all for Art, and you, who have been talking Art and buying beautiful things all your life, now repudiate the one man who comes to Ireland to revive the art of painting.

It never existed in Ireland.

Never mind. It will be revived all the same.

He's a dealer. He has made, according to you, ten thousand pounds in two years, and a dealer never will miss the chance of picking up something, and you'll find that he will pick up something.

There's no use talking any more. I've spent a very pleasant evening. Good-night, Thornley, good-night.

Well, you'll see, were his last words, and he was very sarcastic when it became known that Lane had bought a large Lancet from Sir Algernon Coote at the close of the exhibition, and whenever I went in to smoke a cigar with him he referred to this deal with extraordinary bitterness. I could not see what ground of complaint he had against Lane. Sir Algernon Coote, I often said, was glad to get seven or eight hundred, perhaps a thousand for his picture. What concern is it of yours the price the picture fetches afterwards? He growled in his armchair, averring that Lane had no right to ask Sir Algernon Coote to lend him a picture and then to buy it from him. A most extraordinary proposition, I said. If nobody is to make a profit, there can be no buying or selling. Yourself made a profit upon your sale of Wedgwood.

Sir Thornley did not think that this was quite the same thing, and I said, Pooh, pooh.

We had just begun to forget Lane when we heard that he had run across a Tiepolo at Ostend, and had picked up another picture in Antwerp, and for these pictures and Sir Algernon Coote's Lancet he had been paid seventeen thousand pounds by Durand Ruel. He had not

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taken it all out in cash; Lane's genius lies in swopping. It is a bold man that dares to swop with Durand Ruel, but Lane dares everything, and he got Manet's portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales probably cheaper than a private buyer could have gotten it, on the plea that it was going into a permanent exhibition. It came over with a number of Impressionist pictures, lent by different people—Monet, Pissaro, Renoir, Sisley, Berthe Morisot—all the Impressionist school.

And for what object? Sir Thornley cried.

To found a Gallery of Modern Art. Again I set myself to explain Lane to Sir Thornley, without arriving at any results whatever. He would not, or he could not, understand that though it is Lane's instinct to make money it is also his instinct to spend the money that he makes upon Art. Nobody that I have ever met, Thornley, desires Art as purely as Lane. I have known many people who make money out of Art, but it is generally spent on motor-cars, women, cooks, and valets. But Lane spends hardly anything upon himself. His whole life is absorbed in Art, and he would not be able to gratify his passion if he did not make money. Why will you not be reconciled to him? Why will you not accept him for what he is? I said again and again. But he remained grumpy, doggedly refusing to become a member of the committee, consenting, however, to visit the exhibition, not being able to resist my descriptions of the portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales, the *Itinerant Musician*, and the other pictures.

A wonderful exhibition it was, organised by Lane, who rushed about Dublin from one end to the other, begging of everybody to come to his exhibition, gathering up the ladies into groups, giving them all something to do, telling one that she must collect subscriptions to buy a

certain picture, another one that she must play the piano for him; another would oblige him by playing, or trying to play, it did not matter which, a violin solo, the *Kreutzer Sonata*, or anything else she liked. He discovered a young gentleman who sang comic songs very well; for the sake of Art he was asked to sing. Anybody who could write at all was asked to write letters to the papers. Everybody in Dublin was swept into the exhibition, and as soon as the receipts began to decline Lane was again devising some new method whereby they might be revived. So far I had resisted him, and he came one evening to ask me to write an article.

No, ten thousand times no.

Lane laughed, and suggested a lecture.

I am the only one in Dublin who knew Manet, Monet, Sisley, Renoir, Pissaro—I knew them all at the Nouvelle Athènes. Lane, you tempt me.

When will you be able to give the lecture?

A terror came upon me, and I stuttered, When? One has to speak for an hour, an hour and ten minutes, an hour and fifteen minutes. That would make two fortnightly articles at the very least. Oh, Lane!

I'll begin to advertise the lecture to-morrow. You'll have four days to prepare it.

Four days!

And Lane, who is always in a hurry, bade me good-night abruptly.

VI

It is to Mr. Lane's extraordinary enthusiasm, energy, and love of Art that we owe the pleasure of this beautiful collection of pictures, and, that it may not be but a passing pleasure, it is his proposal to collect funds for

the purchase of these pictures, and to found a Gallery of Modern Art in Dublin. A few days before the Exhibition opened he came to ask for an article about these pictures, but it seemed to me that all I had to say about pictures in the form of articles I had already said; and I did not dare to accept his proposal to deliver a lecture on French Art until it occurred to me that being probably the only person in Dublin who had known the painters whose works hang on the wall, I might, without being thought too presumptuous, come here—I will not say to discuss French Art—I prefer to say to talk about Manet, Degas, Renoir, Pissaro, Monet, and Sisley, and in doing so to discuss French Art indirectly. But before beginning to talk of these great men I must tell how I came to know them, else you will be at a loss to understand why they consented to know me.

When my mother offered me my choice of Oxford or Cambridge, I told her that I had decided to go to Paris. My dear boy, your education—you learned nothing at school. That is why, my dear mother, I intend to devote myself entirely to my own education, and I think it can be better conducted by myself than by a professor. You are taking William with you? my mother asked. I answered that I had arranged that he should accompany me. My mother was soothed, for a valet means conformity to certain conventions. But the young man who sets out on artistic adventure must try to separate himself from all conventions, whether of politics, society, or creed, and my valet did not remain with me for more than six or eight months; for, like Lord Byron's, his continual sighing after beef, beer, and a wife, his incapacity for learning a single word of a foreign language—the beds he couldn't sleep on, and the wines he couldn't drink—I forget how the sentence closes in the letter (addressed, perhaps to Mr.

Murray)—obliged me to send William Malowney back to England. But too much love of living was not the sole cause of William's dismissal. I had begun to feel that he stood between me and myself; I wished above all things to be myself, and to be myself I should have to live the outer as well as the inner life of the Quarter. Myself was the goal I was making for, and to reach it I felt that I must put off the appearance of a gentleman, a change that my William resented; and being unwilling to reduce him to the servitude of brushing French trousers and hats, I gave him the sack. He died in Brompton Consumption Hospital.

In the Middle Ages young men went in search of the Grail; to-day the café is the quest of a young man in search of artistic education. But the cafés about the Odéon and the Luxembourg Gardens did not correspond to my need, I wearied of noisy students, the Latin Quarter seemed to me a little out of fashion; eventually I migrated to Montmartre, and continued my search along the Boulevard Extérieur. One evening I discovered my café on the Place Pigalle, La Nouvelle Athènes! Who named it the Nouvelle Athènes I cannot say; some ancient *cafetier* who foresaw the future glory of his house; for it was La Nouvelle Athènes before the Impressionists, the Parnassians, and the Realists came to spend their evenings on the Place Pigalle. Or was it the burly proprietor, associated always in my mind with a certain excellent *râble de lièvre*? The name sounds as if it were invented on purpose. You wouldn't have thought it was a new Athens if you had seen it in the 'seventies, still less if you saw it to-day, though it still stretches up the acclivity into the Place Pigalle opposite the fountain, the last house of a block of buildings. In my day it was a café of *ratés*, literary and pictorial. Duranty, one of the original

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Realists, a contemporary of Flaubert, turned in to stay with us for an hour or so every night; a quiet, elderly man who knew that he had failed, and whom failure had saddened. Alexis, Céard, and Hennique came in later. At the time I am speaking of Zola had ceased to go to the café, he spent his evenings with his wife; but his disciples—all except Maupassant and Huysmans (I do not remember ever having seen them there)—collected every midnight about the marble tables, lured to the Nouvelle Athènes by their love of Art. One generation of *littérateurs* associates itself with painting, the next with music. The aim and triumph of the Realist were to force the pen to compete with the painter's brush and the engraver's needle in the description, let us say, of a mean street, just as the desire of a symbolistic writer was to describe the vague but intense sensations of music so accurately that the reader would guess the piece he had selected for description, though it were not named in the text. We all entertained doubts regarding the validity of the Art we practised, and envied the Art of the painter, deeming it superior to literature; and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that we used to weary a little of conversation among ourselves, just as dogs weary of their own society, and I think there was a feeling of relief among us all when the painters came in. We raised ourselves up to welcome them—Manet, Degas, Renoir, Pissaro, Monet, and Sisley; they were our masters. A partition rising a few feet or more over the hats of the men sitting at the four marble tables separated the glass front from the main body of the café; two tables in the right-hand corner were reserved for Manet and Degas, and it is pleasant to remember my longing to be received into that circle, and my longing to speak to Manet, whom I had begun to recognise as the great new force in painting.

But evening after evening went by without my daring to speak to him, nor did he speak to me, until one evening—thrice happy evening!—as I sat thinking of him, pretending to be busy correcting proofs. He asked me if the conversation of the café did not distract my attention, and I answered: No, but you do, so like are you to your painting. It seems to me that we became friends at once, for I was invited to his studio in the Rue d'Amsterdam, where his greatest works were painted—all the works that are Manet and nothing but Manet, the real Manet, the Parisian Manet. But before speaking of his painting some description of his personality is essential to an understanding of Manet. It is often said that the personality of the artist concerns us not, and in the case of bad Art it is certainly true, for bad Art reveals no personality, bad Art is bad because it is anonymous. The work of the great artist is himself, and, being one of the greatest painters that ever lived, Manet's Art was all Manet; one cannot think of Manet's painting without thinking of the man himself. The last time I saw Monet was at dinner in the Café Royal, and, after talking of many things, suddenly, without any transition, Monet said, speaking out of a dream: How like Manet was to his painting! and I answered delighted, for it is always exciting to talk about Manet: Yes, how like! That blonde, amusing face, the clear eyes that saw simply, truly, and quickly. And having said so much, my thoughts went back to the time when the glass door of the café grated upon the sand floor, and Manet entered. Though by birth and by education essentially Parisian, there was something in his appearance and manner of speaking that often suggested an Englishman. Perhaps it was his dress—his clean-cut clothes and figure. That figure! Those square shoulders that swaggared as he went across the room, and the thin waist; the face, the

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beard, and the nose, satyr-like shall I say? No, for I would evoke an idea of beauty of line united to that of intellectual expression—frank words, frank passion in his convictions, loyal and simple phrases, clear as well-water, sometimes a little hard, sometimes as they flowed away bitter, but at the fountain-head sweet and full of light.

A man is often well told in an anecdote, and I remember a young man whom Manet thought well of, bringing his sister with him to the studio in the Rue Amsterdam—not an ill-looking girl, no better and no worse than another, a little commonplace, that was all. Manet was affable and charming; he showed his pictures, he talked volubly, but next day when the young man arrived and asked Manet what he thought of his sister, Manet said, extending his arm (the gesture was habitual to him): The last girl in the world I should have thought was your sister. The young man protested, saying Manet had seen his sister dressed to her disadvantage—she was wearing a thick woollen dress, for there was snow on the ground. Manet shook his head. I haven't to look twice; I'm in the habit of judging things.

These were his words, or very nearly, and they seem to me to throw a light upon Manet's painting. He saw quickly and clearly, and stated what he saw candidly, almost innocently. It was not well-mannered perhaps to speak to a brother of his sister in those terms, but we have not come here to discuss good manners, for what are manners but the conventions that obtain at a certain moment, and among a certain class? Well-mannered people do not think sincerely, their minds are full of evasions and subterfuges. Well-mannered people constantly feel that they would not like to think like this or that they would not like to think like that, and whosoever feels he would not like to think out to the end every

thought that may come into his mind should turn from Parnassus. In his search for new formulas, new moulds, all the old values must be swept aside. The artist must arrive at a new estimate of things; all must go into the melting-pot in the hope that out of the pot may emerge a new consummation of himself. For this end he must keep himself free from all creed, from all dogma, from all opinion, remembering that as he accepts the opinions of others he loses his talent, all his feelings and his ideas must be his own, for Art is a personal rethinking of life from end to end, and for this reason the artist is always eccentric. He is almost unaware of your moral codes, he laughs at them when he thinks of them, which is rarely, and he is unashamed as a little child. The word unashamed perhaps explains Manet's art better than any other. It is essentially unashamed, and in speaking of him one must never be afraid to repeat the word unashamed. Manet was born in what is known as refined society; he was a rich man; in dress and appearance he was an aristocrat; but to be aristocratic in Art one must avoid the aristocracy, and Manet was obliged for the sake of his genius to spend his evenings in the café of the Nouvelle Athènes, for there he found artists, lacking in talent, perhaps, but long-haired, shabbily dressed, outcasts by choice and conviction, and from them he could get that which the artist needs more than all else—appreciation. He needed the *rapin* as the fixed star needs the planet, and the faith of the *rapin* is worth more to the artist than the bosom of the hostess, though she thrives in the Champs Élysées. The *rapin* helped Manet to live, for in the years I knew him he never sold a picture, and you will ask yourselves and wonder how it was that in a city like Paris great pictures should remain unsold. I will tell you. In many ways Paris is more like the rest

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of the world than we think for; the moneyed man in Paris, like the moneyed man in London, admires pictures in proportion as they resemble other pictures, but the *rapin* likes pictures in proportion as they differ from other pictures.

After Manet's death his friends made some little stir; there was a sale, and then the prices sank again, sank almost to nothing, and it seemed as if the world would never appreciate Manet. There was a time, fifteen or sixteen years ago, when Manet's pictures could have been bought for twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty pounds apiece, and I remember saying to Albert Wolff, some years after Manet's death: How is it that Degas and Whistler and Monet have come into their inheritance, but there is no sign of recognition of Manet's Art? Wolff answered: The time will never come when people will care for Manet's painting: and I left Tortoni's asking myself if the most beautiful painting the world had ever seen was destined to remain the most unpopular. That was fifteen years ago, and it took fifteen years for the light of Manet's genius to reach Ireland.

I have been asked which of the two pictures hanging in this room it would be better to buy for the Gallery of Modern Art, the *Itinerant Musician* or the portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales. Mr. Lane himself put this question to me, and I answered: I am afraid whichever you choose you will regret you had not chosen the other. The picture of the *Itinerant Musician* is a Spanish Manet, it was painted after Manet had seen Goya, but it is a Manet as much as the portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales; to any one who knows Manet's work it possesses all the qualities which we associate with Manet. All the same, there is a veil between us and Manet in the Spanish picture. The veil is very thin, but there is a veil; the

larger picture is Manet and Goya, but the portrait is Manet and nothing but Manet. And the portrait is an article of faith, for it says: Be not ashamed of anything but to be ashamed. There are Manets that I like more, but the portrait of Mademoiselle Gonzales is what Dublin needs. Salvation comes like a thief in the night, and it may be that Mademoiselle Gonzales will be purchased; if so, it will perhaps help to bring about the crisis we are longing for—that spiritual crisis when men shall begin once more to think of life for themselves, when men shall return to Nature naked and unashamed.

The glass door of the café grates upon the sand again, and Degas enters, a round-shouldered man in a suit of pepper-and-salt. Now there is nothing very trenchantly French about him, except the large necktie. His eyes are small, his words sharp, ironical, cynical. Degas and Manet are the leaders of the Impressionistic school, and their friendship has been jarred but once, when Degas came to the Rue Amsterdam and sat with his back to the pictures, saying that his eyes were too weak to look at them. If your eyes are too weak you shouldn't have come to see me, Manet answered. Manet is an instinct, Degas an intellectuality, and he believes with Edgar Poe that one becomes original by saying, I will not do a certain thing because it has been done before.

So the day came when Degas had to put *Semiramis* aside for a ballet girl; the ballet girl had not been painted before; it was Degas who introduced her and the acrobat and the *repassseuse* into art. And remembering that portraits lacked intimacy, he designed Manet sprawling on a sofa indifferent to his wife's music, thinking of the painting he had done that morning, or of the painting he was going to do the next morning. If Leonardo had lived in the nineteenth century, I said, he might have

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painted like that; and I wandered on through the Louvre thinking of the twain as intellectuals, till Rembrandt's portrait of his wife absorbed me as no other picture had ever done, and perhaps as no other picture will ever do again. The spell that it laid upon me was conclusive; when I approached the eyes faded into brown shadow, but when I withdrew they began to tell the story of a soul—of one who seems conscious of her weakness, of her sex, and the burden of her own special lot—she is Rembrandt's wife, a servant, satellite, a watcher. The mouth is no more than a little shadow, but what wistful tenderness there is in it! and the colour of the face is white, faintly tinted with bitumen, and in the cheeks some rose madder shows through the yellow. She wears a fur jacket; grey pearls hang in her ears; there is a brooch upon her breast, and a hand at the bottom of the picture passing out of the frame, and the hand reminds us, as the chin does, of the old story that God took a little clay, etc., for the chin and hand and arm are moulded without display of knowledge as Nature moulds.

The *Mona Lisa*, celebrated in literature, hanging a few feet away, seems factitious when compared with this portrait; her hesitating smile which held my youth in a little tether has come to seem to me but a grimace, and the pale mountains no more mysterious than a globe or map seems at a distance, a sort of riddle, an acrostic, a poetical decoction, a ballade, a rondel, a villanelle, or ballade with double burden, a sestina or chant royal. The *Mona Lisa*, being literature in intention rather than painting, has drawn round her many poets, and we must forgive her many mediocre verses for the sake of a prose passage that our generation had by heart. The *Mona Lisa* and Degas's *Leçon de Danse* are thoughtful pictures painted with the brains rather than with the tempera-

ments; and we ask sooner or later, but assuredly we ask, of what worth are Degas's descriptions of washer-women and dancers and race-horses compared with that fallen flower, that Aubusson carpet, above all, the foot-stool? and if any one of Degas's pictures is bought for this gallery I hope it will be one of these early pictures, the red-headed girl, for instance, an unfinished sketch, exhibited some time ago at Knightsbridge, the property, I believe, of Durand Ruel.

In the days of the Nouvelle Athènes we used to repeat Degas's witticisms, how he once said to Whistler, Whistler, if you were not a genius you would be the most ridiculous man in Paris. Leonardo made roads, Degas makes witticisms. I remember his answer when I confided to him one day that I did not care for Daumier—the beautiful *Don Quixote and Sancho Panza* that hangs on the wall I had not then seen; that is my apology, an insufficient one, I admit. Degas answered, If you were to show Raphael a Daumier he would admire it, but if you were to show him a Cabanel he would say with a sigh: That is my fault—an excellent quip. But we should not attach the same importance to a quip as to a confession. Manet said to me: I tried to write, but I couldn't; and we must esteem these words as an artist's brag; I am a painter, and only a painter. Degas could not boast that he was a painter and only a painter, for he often wearied of painting; he turned to modelling, and he abandoned modelling for the excitement of collecting pictures—not for himself but for the Louvre. I've got it, he said to me in the Rue Maubeuge, and he was surprised when I asked him what he had got; great egotists always take it for granted that every one is thinking of what they are doing. Why, the *Jupiter*, of course the *Jupiter*, and he took me to see the picture—a Jupiter with beetling brows, and a

thunderbolt in his hand. He had hung a pear next to it, a speckled pear on six inches of canvas, one that used to hang in Manet's studio, and guessing he was about to be delivered of a quip, I waited. You notice the pear? Yes, I said. I hung it next to the *Jupiter* to show that a well-painted pear could overthrow a God. There is a picture by Mr. Sargent in this room—one of his fashionable women. She is dressed to receive visitors, and is about to spring from her chair; the usual words, How do you do, Mary, are upon her crimson lips, and the usual hysterical lights are in her eyes, and her arms are like bananas as usual. There is in this portrait the same factitious surface-life that informs all his pictures, and, recognising fashionable gowns and drawing-room vivacities as the fundamental Sargent, Degas described him as *Le chef de rayon de la peinture*. *Le chef de rayon* is the young man behind the counter who says, I think, madam, that this piece of mauve silk would suit your daughter admirably, ten yards at least will be required. If your daughter will step upstairs, I will take her measure. *Vous pouvez me confier votre fille; soyez sûre que je ne voudrais rien faire qui pût nuire à mon commerce.*

Any one, Degas said once to me, can have talent when he is five-and-twenty; it is more difficult to have talent when you are fifty. I remember the Salon in which Bastien Lepage exhibited his *Potato Harvest*, and we all admired it till Degas said, The Bouguereau of the modern movement. Then every one understood that Bastien Lepage's talent was not an original but a derivative talent, and when Roll, another painter of the same time, exhibited his enormous picture entitled *Work*, containing fifty figures, Degas said, One doesn't make a crowd with fifty figures, one makes a crowd with five. Quips, merely quips, and there were far too many quips in Degas's life; and I include in my list of

quips a great number of ballet girls and race-horses. His butcher's corpulent wife standing before a tin tub was much talked about in our café, until Monet returned after a long absence in the country, bringing with him twenty or thirty canvases, a row of poplars seen in perspective against a grey sky, or a view of the Seine with a bridge cutting the picture in equal halves, or a cottage shrouded in snow with some low hills. Pissaro admired these, of course, but his preference ran to Sisley, who, he said, was more of a poet; and should a Sisley come later into this collection, my hope is that it will be a picture I saw years ago in the galleries of George Pettit: the bare wall of a cottage, a frozen pond, and some poplar-trees showing against the first film of light, a vision so exquisite that Constable's art seems in comparison coarse and clumsy.

Monet's art is colder, more external, and those who like to trace individual qualities back to race influence may, if they will, attribute the exquisite reverie which distinguishes Sisley's pictures to his northern blood.

Monet began by imitating Manet, and Manet ended by imitating Monet. They were great friends. Manet painted Monet and Madame Monet in their garden, and Monet painted Manet and Madame Manet in the same garden; they exchanged pictures, but after a quarrel each returned the other his picture. Monet's picture of Manet and his wife I never saw, but Manet's picture of Monet and Madame Monet belongs to a very wealthy merchant, a Monsieur Pellerin, who has the finest collection of Manets and Cézannes in the world. Cézanne exhibited with the Impressionists, but I do not remember having seen him in the Nouvelle Athènes or heard his name mentioned by Manet or Degas. Alexis told us once that he had breakfast with him that morning at the *Moulin de la*

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Galette, and that Cézanne had arrived in jack-boots covered with mud and had spent thirty francs on the meal, which was an unusual feat in those days and in those districts. Alexis was struck by the resemblance of Cézanne to his pictures. A peasant come straight out of *The Reapers*, he said; I thought of Manet, and we congratulated ourselves on the advancement of our taste, forgetful that the next generation may speak of Cézanne's portraits as the art of the trowel rather than of the brush. The word masonry must have been in Zola's mind when he exalted Cézanne in *L'Œuvre*, and at the dinner given to celebrate the publication of the book declared him to be a greater painter than Manet. Both came from Aix; both had talent; and both were denied the exquisite vision and handicraft of Sisley and Verlaine.

Within the Impressionist movement were two women, Mary Casatt, who derived her art from Degas, and Berthe Morisot, who derived hers from Manet. Berthe Morisot married Manet's brother, and there can be little doubt that she would have married Manet if Manet had not been married already. I remember him saying to me once: My sister-in-law wouldn't have been noticed without me; she carried my art across her fan. Berthe is dead, and her pictures are very expensive and picture-dealers do not make presents, but Mary Casatt is alive, she is a rich woman, and I take this opportunity of suggesting that she should be asked to give a picture. After an absence of many years I went to see her and found her blind, but talkative as of yore, and we talked of all the people we had known, till at the end of breakfast she said, There is one we haven't spoken about, perhaps the greatest of all. I said, You mean Renoir? And she reproached me with having been always a little indifferent to his art. I don't think that this is true,

or if it be true, it is only true in a way. I know of nothing that I would rather hang in my drawing-room than one of Renoir's bathers, or a portrait of a child in grey fur dressed to be taken to the Bois by her mother. Some of his portraits of children are the most beautiful I know—they are white and flower-like, and therefore very unlike the stunted, leering little monkeys that Sir Joshua Reynolds persuaded us to accept as representative of tall and beautiful English children. I think it was at the end of the 'sixties that Renoir painted the celebrated picture of the woman looking into the canary cage—a wonderful picture, but so unlike his later work that it may be doubted if anybody would recognise it as being by the man who painted the bathers. By the bathers I mean all the plump girls whom he painted on green banks under trees, their fat so permeated with light that they seem like luminous flowers; yet they are flesh, and full-blooded flesh that would bleed. It may be that Manet never painted naked flesh so realistically. His art is less casual, less modern, less actual, than Renoir's. It came out of a different tradition, and upon it is the birthmark of easy circumstances and the culture thereof; whereas Renoir was a Parisian workman; he began life in a factory painting flowers, and his talent was not sufficient to redeem his art from the taint of an inherited vulgarity. Whistler would have cried for an umbrella to hide himself under were he asked to consider *The Umbrellas*.

The man I see when my thoughts return to the Nouvelle Athènes is a tall, lean man with red in his ragged hair and beard, and his voice has a ring in it. If Renoir had not been an aesthete he would have been a Socialist orator. Some of his denunciations are quoted in *Confessions of a Young Man*, and here is an anecdote that a few may think

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instructive. Money suddenly began to accumulate at his bank, and he bethought himself of a stock of wine and cigars, a carriage, several suits of clothes, or a flat in the quarter of the Champs Élysées with a mistress in it. But turning from these legitimate issues, he went to Venice to study Tintoretto, and on his return to Paris he laboured in a school of art until it became plain to him that his studies, instead of decreasing, were increasing the distance between himself and Tintoretto. I remember his embittered, vehement voice in the Nouvelle Athènes, and I caught a glimpse of his home life on the day that I went to Montmartre to breakfast with him, and finding him, to my surprise, living in the same terrace as Paul Alexis, I asked: Shall we see Alexis after breakfast? He would waste the whole of my afternoon, Renoir muttered, sitting here smoking cigars and sipping cognac; and I must get on with my picture. Marie, as soon as we have finished, bring in the asparagus, and get your clothes off, for I shall want you in the studio when we have had our coffee.

The evenings that Pissaro did not come to the Nouvelle Athènes were so rare that I cannot think of the Nouvelle Athènes without seeing him in the far corner on the right, listening to Manet and Degas, approving of all they said. I remember his pictures, many of them, as well as his white beard and hair, and nose of the race of Abraham. He figures in *Confessions of a Young Man*, and turning to this youthful book I find an appreciation of him, and, as I think to-day as I thought then, I will quote it. Speaking of a group of girls gathering apples in a garden, I wrote: Sad greys and violets, beautifully harmonised with figures that seem to move as in a dream on the thither side of life, in a world of quiet colour and perfect resignation. But the apples will never fall from the branches,

the baskets of the stooping girls will never be filled, for the orchard is one that life has not for giving, that the painter has set in an eternal dream of violet and grey, an apple orchard with peasants gathering the spare fruit of the mildew collected on a planet's surface. The picture in the present exhibition represents Pissaro in his first period, when he followed Corot; I hope Dublin will acquire it. And having said this much, my thoughts return to the last time I spoke with this dear old man, so like himself and his race. It was at Rouen about six years ago, whither he had gone to paint the Cathedral. For Monet having painted the Cathedral, why not he likewise? Why not, indeed? for he always followed somebody's dream. But though his wanderings were many and sudden, he never quite lost his individuality, not even when he painted yachts after the manner of Signac.

Who had invented Impressionism? was asked when he died, and attempts were made to trace Monet back to Turner. Monet, it was said, had been to England, and in England he must have seen Turner, and it was impossible to see Turner without being influenced by Turner. Yes! Monet was in England many times, and he painted in England, and one day we went together to an Exhibition of old Masters in Burlington House, and there we saw a picture for which many thousands of pounds had just been paid, and Monet said, Is that brown thing your great Turner? It is true, the picture we were looking at was not much more interesting than brown paper, and I told him that Turner had painted other pictures that he would like better, *The Frosty Morning*, and he said he had seen it, remarking that Turner had painted that morning with his eyes open. Whistler liked *Calais Pier* better than *The Frosty Morning*, for it was more like his own painting, and no very special discernment is required

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to understand that Turner and Constable could not have influenced painters whose desire was to dispense altogether with shadow. Whether, by doing so, they failed sometimes to differentiate between a picture and a strip of wallpaper is a question that does not come within the scope of the present inquiry. Mr. Lane is asking us to consider if a collection of Impressionist pictures would benefit Dublin, and it seems to me certain that Manet, Monet, Sisley, and Renoir are more likely to draw our thoughts to the beauty of this world than a collection of Italian pictures gathered from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

VII

As soon as the applause died away, Yeats, who had lately returned to us from the States with a paunch, a huge stride, and an immense fur overcoat, rose to speak. We were surprised at the change in his appearance, and could hardly believe our ears when, instead of talking to us as he used to do about the old stories come down from generation to generation, he began to thunder like Ben Tillett against the middle classes, stamping his feet, working himself into a great temper, and all because the middle classes did not dip their hands into their pockets and give Lane the money he wanted for his exhibition. When he spoke the words, the middle classes, one would have thought that he was speaking against a personal foe, and we looked round asking each other with our eyes where on earth our Willie Yeats had picked up the strange belief that none but titled and carriage-folk could appreciate pictures. And we asked ourselves why our Willie Yeats should feel himself called upon to denounce his own class; millers and shipowners on one side, and on

the other a portrait painter of distinction; and we laughed, remembering Æ's story, that one day whilst Yeats was crooning over his fire Yeats had said that if he had his rights he would be Duke of Ormonde. Æ's answer was: I am afraid, Willie, you are overlooking your father,—a detestable remark to make to a poet in search of an ancestry; and the addition: We both belong to the lower middle classes, was in equally bad taste. Æ knew that there were spoons in the Yeats family bearing the Butler crest, just as there are portraits in my family of Sir Thomas More, and he should have remembered that certain passages in *The Countess Cathleen* are clearly derivative from the spoons. He should have remembered that all the romantic poets have sought illustrious ancestry, and rightly, since romantic poetry is concerned only with nobles and castles, gonfalons and oriflammes. Villiers de l'Isle Adam believed firmly in his descent, and appeared on all public occasions with the Order of Malta pinned upon his coat; and Victor Hugo, too, had inquired out his ancestry in all the archives of Spain and France before sitting down to write *Hernani* . . . and with good reason, for with the disappearance of gonfalons and donjons it may be doubted if—— My meditation was interrupted by Yeats's voice.

We have sacrificed our lives for Art; but you, what have you done? What sacrifices have you made? he asked, and everybody began to search his memory for the sacrifices that Yeats had made, asking himself in what prison Yeats had languished, what rags he had worn, what broken victuals he had eaten. As far as anybody could remember, he had always lived very comfortably, sitting down invariably to regular meals, and the old green cloak that was in keeping with his profession of romantic poet he had exchanged for the magnificent fur

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coat which distracted our attention from what he was saying, so opulently did it cover the back of the chair out of which he had risen. But, quite forgetful of the coat behind him, he continued to denounce the middle classes, throwing his arms into the air, shouting at us, and we thinking not at all of what he was saying, but of a story that had been floating about Dublin for some time. A visitor had come back from Coole telling how he had discovered the poet lying on a sofa in a shady corner, a plate of strawberries on his knee, and three or four adoring ladies serving him with cream and sugar, and how the poet, after wiping his hands on a napkin, had consented to recite some verses, and the verses he recited were these:

I said, A line will take us hours maybe,
Yet if it does not seem a moment's thought
Our stitching and unstitching has been naught.
Better go down upon your marrow-bones
And scrub a kitchen pavement, or break stones
Like an old pauper in all kinds of weather;
For to articulate sweet sounds together
Is to work harder than all these and yet
Be thought an idler by the noisy set
Of bankers, schoolmasters and clergymen,
The martyrs call the world.

The poet advanced a step or two nearer to the edge of the platform, and stamping his foot he asked again what the middle classes had done for Art, and in a towering rage (the phrase is no mere figure of speech, for he raised himself up to tremendous height) he called upon the ladies and gentlemen that had come to hear my lecture to put their hands in their pockets and give guineas to the

stewards who were waiting at the doors to receive them, or, better still, to write large cheques. By virtue of our subscriptions we should cease to belong to the middle classes, and having held out this hope to us he retired to his chair and fell back overcome into the middle of the great fur coat, and remained silent until the end of the debate.

As soon as it was over criticism began, not of my lecture, but of Yeats's speech, and on Saturday night all my friends turned in to discuss his contention that the middle classes had never done anything for Art. Æ pointed out that the aristocracy had given England no great poet except Byron, whom many people did not look upon as a poet at all, and though Shelley's poetry was unquestionable, he could hardly be considered as belonging to the aristocracy, his father being no more than a Sussex baronet. All the other poets, it was urged, came from the middle classes, not only the poets, but the painters, the musicians, and the sculptors. Yeats's attack upon the middle classes, somebody cried, is the most absurd that was ever made; the aristocracy have Byron, and the peasants have Burns, all the others belong to us. Somebody chimed in: Not even the landowners have produced a poet, and he was answered that Landor was a considerable landed proprietor. But he was the only one. Not a single painter came out of the aristocracy. Lord Carlyle's name was mentioned; everybody laughed, and I said that the distinction of the classes was purely an arbitrary one. It was agreed that if riches can poison inspiration, poverty is a stimulant, and then leaning out of his corner Æ remarked that Willie Yeats's best poems were written when he was a poor boy in Sligo, a remark that fanned the flame of discussion, and the difficult question was broached why Yeats had ceased to write

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poetry. All his best poems, Æ said, were written before he went to London. Apart from the genius which he brought into the world, it was Sligo that had given his poetry a turn of its own. Everybody knew some of his verses by heart, and we took pleasure in listening to them again. The calves basking on the hillside were mentioned, the colleen going to church. But, somebody cried out suddenly, he took his colleen to London and put paint upon her cheeks and dye upon her hair, and sent her up Piccadilly. Another critic added that the last time he saw her she was wearing a fine hat and feathers. Supplied by Arthur Symons, cried another. As sterile a little wanton as ever I set eyes upon, who lives in remembrance of her beauty, saying nothing, exclaimed still another critic. And the silences that Yeats's colleen had observed these many years were regretted, somewhat hypocritically I think, for, as Æ says, a literary movement consists of five or six people who live in the same town and hate each other cordially. But, if we were not really sorry that Yeats's inspiration was declining, we were quite genuinely interested to discover the cause of it. Æ was certain that he would have written volume after volume if he had never sought a style, if he had been content to write simply; and all his utterances on the subject of style were repeated.

He came this afternoon into the National Library, John Eglinton said, breaking silence, and he told me he was collecting his writings for a complete edition, a library edition in ten or twelve volumes.

But he is only thirty-seven.

He said his day was over, John Eglinton answered . . . and in speaking of the style of his last essay, he said: Ah, that style! I made it myself. And then another, Longworth I think it was, said that he failed to understand

how anybody could speak of a style apart from some definite work already written by him in that style. A style does not exist in one's head, it exists upon paper, and Yeats has no style, neither bad nor good, for he writes no more. Æ thought that Yeats had discovered a style, and a very fine style indeed, and compared it to a suit of livery which a man buys before he engages a servant; the livery is made of the best cloth, the gold lace is the very finest, the cockade can be seen from one side of the street to the other, but when the footman comes he is always too tall or too thin or too fat, so the livery is never worn.

Excellent! cried Gogarty, and the livery hangs in a press upstairs, becoming gradually moth-eaten.

Æ regretted the variants: he knew them all and preferred the earlier text in every case, and when literary criticism was over we turned to the poet's own life to discover why it was that he sang no more songs for us. We had often heard him say that his poems had arisen out of one great passion, and this interesting avowal raised the no less interesting question—which produces the finer fruit, the gratified or the ungratified passion. It was clearly my turn to speak, and I told how Wesendonck had built a pavilion at the end of his garden so that Wagner might compose the *Valkyrie*, and how at the end of every day when Wagner had finished his work, Mathilde's wont was to visit him, her visits inspiring by degrees a great passion, which, out of loyalty to Wesendonck, they resisted until the fatal day when he read her the poem of *Tristan and Isolde*. After the reading they had stood looking at each other, as Tristan and Isolde stand looking at each other in the opera. Later Minna, Wagner's wife, intercepted a letter which she took to Madame Wesendonck, and the interview between the two

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women was so violent that Wagner had to send his wife to Dresden. The first letter of the many that he wrote to Mathilde Wesendonck tells the miserable dawning of the day he withdrew from Switzerland to meditate on suicide and his setting of some verses of the well-beloved. Regret nothing, he writes from Venice, I beseech you, regret nothing. Your kisses were the crown of my life, my recompense for many years of suffering. Regret nothing, I beseech you, regret nothing. Minna had no doubt as to Richard's guilt, nor have we, but the translator of the letters, Mr. Ashton Ellis, and others, have preferred to regard this passion as ungratified, and it is evident that they think that the truth is not worth seeking since the drama and the music and the letters cannot now be affected thereby. For better or worse you have the music, you have the drama, you have the correspondence. What can it matter whether an act purely physical happened, or failed to happen? Everything, I answer, for thereof I learn whether Wagner wrote out of a realised or an unrealised desire. As we sat round the fire I broke silence. Love, I said, that has *not* been born again in the flesh crumbles like peat ash. Yeats's love for Maud Gonne, said *Æ*, has lasted for many years and will continue, and I know that it has always been a pure love.

A detestable phrase, *Æ*, for it implies that every gratified love must be impure. And from that day onward I continued to meditate the main secret of Yeats's life, until one day we happened to meet at Broadstone Station. We were going to the West; we breakfasted together in the train, and after breakfast the conversation took many turns, and we talked of her whom he had loved always, the passionate ideal of his life, and why this ideal had never become a reality to him as Mathilde had become to

Richard. Was it really so? was my pressing question, and he answered me:

I was very young at the time and was satisfied with . . . My memory fails me, or perhaps the phrase was never finished. The words I supply, the spirit of sense, are merely conjectural.

Yes, I understand, the common mistake of a boy; and I was sorry for Yeats and for his inspiration which did not seem to have survived his youth, because it had arisen out of an ungratified desire; and I fell to thinking that hyacinths grown in a vase only bloom for a season. But if it had been otherwise? On such questions one may meditate a long while, and it was not until the train ran into Westport that I remembered my prediction when Symons had shown me *Rosa Alchemica*. His inspiration, I had said, is at an end, for he talks about how he is going to write, and I told Symons that I had noticed all through my life that a man may tell the subject of his poem and write it, but if he tells how he is going to write his poem he will never write it. Mallarmé projected hundreds of poems, and, like Yeats, Mallarmé was always talking about style. The word style never came into Mallarmé's conversation, but, like Yeats, his belief was that the poet should have a language of his own. Every other art, I remember him saying, has a special language—sculpture, music, painting; why shouldn't the poet have his? He set himself to the task of inventing a language, but it was such a difficult one that it left him very little time for writing; and so we have but twenty sonnets and *L'Après-midi d'un Faune* written in it. *Son œuvre* calls to mind a *bibelot*, a carven nick-nack, wrought ivory, or jade, or bronze, and like bronze it will acquire a patina. His phrases will never grow old, for they tell us nothing; the secret meaning is so deeply embedded that

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generations will try to puzzle through them; and in the volume entitled *The Wind among the Reeds* Yeats has written poems so difficult that even the adepts could not disentangle the sense; and since *The Wind among the Reeds* he has written a sonnet that clearly referred to a house. But to what house? *Æ* inclined to the opinion that it referred to the House of Lords, but the poet, being written to from Ely Place, replied that the subject of his sonnet was Coole Park. Mallarmé could not be darker than this. But whereas to write a language apart was Mallarmé's sole aestheticism and one which he never abandoned after the publication of *L'Après-midi d'un Faune*, Yeats advocated two languages, one which he employs himself, another which he would use if he could, but being unable to use it he counsels its use to others, and has put up a sign-post: This way to Parnassus. It is amusing to think of Mallarmé and Yeats together; they would have got on famously until Yeats began to tell Mallarmé that the poet would learn the language he required in Le Berry. Mallarmé was a subtle mind, and he would have thought the idea ingenious that a language is like a spring which rises in the highlands, trickles into a rivulet and flows into a river, and needs no filter until the river has passed through a town; he would have listened to these theories with interest, but Yeats would not have been able to persuade him to set out for Le Berry, and the journey would have been useless if he had, for Mallarmé had no ear for folk, less than Yeats himself, who has only half an ear; an exquisite ear for the beauty of folk imagination, and very little for folk idiom. Are not the ways of Nature strange? for he loves folk idiom as none has ever loved it, and few have had better opportunities of learning it than he along his uncle's wharves in Sligo Town and among the slopes of Ben Bulbin, whither he went daily, interested in birds and beasts and the stories

that the folk tell. As pretty a nosegay as ever was gathered he tied on those slopes; there is no prettier book of literature than *Celtic Twilight*, and one of the tales, *The Last Gleeman*, must have put into Yeats's mind the idea that he has followed ever since, that the Irish people write very well when they are not trying to write that worn-out and defaced idiom which educated people speak and write, and which is known as English. And it is Yeats's belief that those among us who refuse to write are forced back upon artificial speech which they create, and which is often very beautiful; the beauty of Pater's or Morris's cannot be denied, but their speech, Yeats would say, lacks naturalness; it is not living speech, that is how he would phrase it, and his thoughts would go back to Michael Moran, the last of the Gleemen, who, he thinks, was more fortunate than the two great writers mentioned, for Michael wrote (it would be more correct to say he composed, for it is doubtful if he knew how to write) living speech—*i.e.* a speech that has never been printed. Yeats's whole aestheticism is expressed in these words: A speech that has never been printed, and the peasant is the only one who can give us speech that has not appeared in print. But peasant speech limits the range of our ideas. A pure benefit, Yeats would say; we must purify ourselves in ignorance. But peasant speech is only adapted to dialogue. To this objection he might answer with Landor that Shakespeare and the best parts of Homer were written in dialogue, and it would be heartless to reply: But not the best part of your own works, Yeats. Your mind is as subtle as a Brahmin's, woven along and across with ideas, and you cannot catch the idiom as it flows off the lips. You are like Moses, who may not enter the Promised Land. He would not care to answer: Even if what you say be true, you must admit that I have led some others thither.

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I beg pardon, there; and he would fold himself up like a pelican and dream of his disciples. His dream was always of disciples; even when I met him in the Cheshire Cheese he was looking for disciples; he sought in vain till he met Lady Gregory. And a great day it was for Ireland when she came over to Tillyra, and met, whom do you think? Yeats, of course. Here I must break off my narrative to give a more explicit account of Lady Gregory than the reader will find in *Ave*.

Lady Gregory is a Persse, and the Persses are an ancient Galway family; the best-known branch is the Moyaude branch, for it was at Moyaude that Burton Persse bred and hunted the Galway Blazers for over thirty years . . . till his death. Moyaude has passed away, but Roxborough continues, never having indulged in either horses or hounds, a worthy but undistinguished family in love, in war, or in politics, never having indulged in anything except a taste for Bible reading in the cottages. A staunch Protestant family, if nothing else, the Roxborough Persses certainly are. Mrs. Persse and her two elder daughters were ardent soul-gatherers in the days gone by, but Lady Gregory did not join them in their missionary work, holding always to the belief that there was great danger in persuading any one to leave the religion learnt in childhood, for we could never be sure that another would find a place in the heart. In saying as much she wins our hearts, but our intelligence warns us against the seduction, and we remember that we may not acquiesce in what we believe to be error. The ignorant and numbed mind cannot be acceptable to God, so do we think, and take our stand with Mrs. Persse and the elder sisters. We are glad, however, though we are not sure that our gladness on such a point is not a sign of weakness, still we are glad that Sir William chose Augusta rather than one of her

elder sisters, either of whom would certainly have fired up in the carriage when Sir William, on his way to Coole, suggested to his bride that she should refrain from pointing out to his tenants what she believed to be a different teaching of the Bible from that which they received from the parish priest. He would probably say: You have made no converts—(we have forgotten Mrs. Shaw Taylor's Christian name, but Agnes will serve our purpose as well as another)—you have made no converts, Agnes, but you have shaken the faith of thousands. The ground at Roxborough has been cleared for the sowing, but Kiltartan can wait. *Which Path Should Agnes Have Followed?* is clearly the title of a six-shilling novel which I pass on to my contemporaries; meanwhile I have pleasure in stating here, for my statement is implicated in an artistic movement, the Abbey Theatre, that the Gospels were never read by Lady Gregory round Kiltartan. I should like to fill in a page or two about her married life, but though we know our neighbours very well in one direction, in another there is nothing that we know less than our neighbours, and Lady Gregory has never been for me a very real person. I imagine her without a mother, or father, or sisters, or brothers, *sans attache*. It is difficult to believe, but it is nevertheless true, that fearing a too flagrant mistake, I had to ask a friend the other day if I were right in supposing that Mrs. Shaw Taylor was Lady Gregory's sister, an absurd question truly, for Mrs. Shaw Taylor's house (I have forgotten its name) is within a mile of Tillyra, and I must have been there many times. We may cultivate our memories in one direction, but by so doing we curtail them in another, and documentary evidence jars my style. I like to write of Lady Gregory from the evening that Edward drove me over to Coole, the night of the dinner-party. There is in the first part

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of this book a portrait of her as I saw her that night, a slim young woman of medium height and slight figure; her hair, parted in the middle, was brushed in wide bands about a brow which even at that time was intellectual. The phrase previously used, if my memory does not deceive me, was high and cultured; I think I said that she wore a high-school air, and the phrase expresses the idea she conveyed to me—an air of mixed timidity and restrained anxiety. On the whole it was pleasant to pass from her to Sir William, who was more at his ease, more natural. He spoke to me affably about a Velasquez in the National Gallery, which was not a Velasquez; it is now set down as a Zurbaran, but the last attribution does not convince me any more than the first. He wore the Lord Palmerston air; it was the air of that generation, but he did not wear it nearly so well as my father.

These two men were of the same generation and their interests were the same; both were travelled men; Sir William's travels were not so original as my father's, and the race-horses that he kept were not so fast, and his politics were not so definite; he was more of an opportunist than my father, more careful and cautious, and therefore less interesting. Galway has not produced so many interesting men as Mayo; its pastures are richer, but its men are thinner in intellect. But if we are considering Lady Gregory's rise in the world, we must admit that she owes a great deal to her husband. He took her to London, and she enjoyed at least one season in a tall house in the little enclosure known as St. George's Place; and there met a number of eminent men whose books and conversation were in harmony with her conception of life, still somewhat formal. One afternoon Lecky the historian left her drawing-room as I entered it, and I remember the look of pleasure on her face when she men-

tioned the name of her visitor, and her pleasure did not end with Lecky, for a few minutes afterwards Edwin Arnold, the poet of *The Light of Asia*, was announced. She would have liked to have had him all to herself, and I think that she thought my conversation a little ill-advised when I spoke to Sir Edwin of a book lately published on the subject of Buddhism, and asked him what book was the best to read on this subject. He did not answer my question directly, but very soon he was telling Lady Gregory that he had just received a letter from India from a distinguished Buddhist who had read *The Light of Asia* and could find no fault in it; the Buddhist doctrine as related by him had been related faultlessly. And with this little anecdote Sir Edwin thought my question sufficiently answered. The conversation turned on the coloured races, and I remember Sir Edwin's words. The world will not be perfect, he said, until we get the black notes into the gamut. A pretty bit of Telegraphese which pleased Lady Gregory; and when Sir Edwin rose to go she produced a fan and asked him to write his name upon one of the sticks. But she did not ask me to write my name, though at that time I had written not only *A Modern Lover*, but also *A Mummer's Wife*, and I left the house feeling for the first time that the world I lived in was not so profound as I had imagined it to be. If I remember the circumstances quite rightly, Sir William came into the room just as I was leaving it, and she showed him the fan; he looked a little distressed at her want of tact, and it was some years afterward that I heard, and not without surprise, that she had shown some literary ability in the editing of his *Memoirs*. The publication of these *Memoirs* was a great day for Roxborough, but not such a great day for Ireland as the day she drove over to Tillyra.

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I was not present at the time, but from Edward's account of the meeting she seems to have recognised her need in Yeats at once, foreseeing dimly, of course, but foreseeing that he would help her out of conventions and prejudices, and give her wings to soar in the free air of ideas and instincts. She was manifestly captured by his genius, and seemed to dread that the inspiration the hills of Sligo had nourished might wither in the Temple where he used to spend long months with his friend Arthur Symons. He had finished all his best work at the time, the work whereby he will live; *The Countess Cathleen* had not long been written, and he was dreaming the poem of *The Shadowy Waters*, and where could he dream it more fortunately than by the lake at Coole? The wild swans gather there, and every summer he returned to Coole to write *The Shadowy Waters*, writing under her tutelage and she serving him as amanuensis, collecting the different versions, etc.

Thus much of the literary history of this time has already been written, but what has not been written, or only hinted at, is the interdependence of these two minds. It was he, no doubt, who suggested to her the writing of the Cuchulain legends. It must have been so, for he had long been dreaming of an epic poem to be called *Cuchulain*; but feeling himself unable for so long a task he entrusted it to Lady Gregory, and led her from cabin to cabin in search of a style, and they returned to Coole ruminating the beautiful language of the peasants and the masterpiece quickening in it, Yeats a little sad, but by no means envious toward Lady Gregory, and sad, if at all, that his own stories in the volume entitled *The Secret Rose* were not written in living speech. It is pleasant to think that, as he opened the park gates for her to pass through, the thought glided into his mind that perhaps in some sub-

sequent edition she might help him with the translation. But the moment was for the consideration of a difficulty that had arisen suddenly. The legends of Cuchulain are written in a very remote language, bearing little likeness to the modern Irish which Lady Gregory had learnt in common with everybody connected with the Irish Literary Movement, Yeats and myself excepted. A dictionary of the ancient language exists, and it is easy to look out a word; but a knowledge of Early or Middle Irish is only obtained gradually after years of study; Lady Gregory confesses herself in her preface to be no scholar, and that she pieced together her text from various French and German translations. This method recommends itself to Yeats, who says in his preface that by collating the various versions of the same tale and taking the best bits out of each the stories are now told perfectly for the first time, a singular view for a critic of Yeats's understanding to hold, a strange theory to advocate, the strangest, we do not hesitate to say, that has ever been put forward by so distinguished a poet and critic as Yeats. He was a severer critic the day that he threw out Edward's play with so much indignity in Tillyra. He was then a monk of literature, an inquisitor, a Torquemada, but in this preface he bows to Lady Gregory's taste as if she were the tale-teller that the world had been waiting for, one whose art exceeded that of Balzac or Turgenev for neither would have claimed the right to refashion the old legends in accordance with his own taste or the taste of his neighbourhood. I left out a good deal Lady Gregory writes in her preface I thought you would not care about. The you refers to the people of Kiltartan to whom Lady Gregory dedicates her book. It seems to me that Balzac and Turgenev would have taken a different view as to the duty of a modern writer to the old legends; both would

have said: It is never justifiable to alter a legend; it has come down to us because it contains some precious message, and the message the legend carries will be lost or worsened if the story be altered or mutilated or deformed. And who am I, Balzac would have said, that I should alter a message that has come down from a far-off time, a message often enfolded in the tale so secretly that it is all things to all men? My province, he would have continued, is not to alter the story, but to interpret it, and we have not to listen very intently to hear him say: Not only I may, I must interpret. There can be little doubt that Yeats is often injudicious in his noble preface, and he exposes Lady Gregory to criticism when he depreciates the translation from which Lady Gregory said she worked. She might have written: Which I quote, for she follows Kuno Meyer's translation of *The Wooing of Emer* sentence by sentence, and it is our puzzle to discover how Kuno Meyer's English is worthless when he signs it and beautiful when Lady Gregory quotes it. A clear case of literary transubstantiation, I said, speaking of the miracle to a friend who happened to be a Roman Catholic, and she gave me the definition of the catechism: the substance is the same, but the incident is different. Or it may have been: the incident is the same and the substance is different; one cannot always be sure that one remembers theology correctly. A little examination, however, of Lady Gregory's text enabled us to dismiss the theological aspect as untenable. Here and there we find she has altered the words; Kuno Meyer's title is *The Wooing of Emer*; Lady Gregory has changed it to *The Courting of Emer* (she is writing living speech); and if Kuno Meyer wrote that Emer received Cuchulain in her bower, Lady Gregory, for the same reason, would certainly change it to: she asked him into her parlour. The word lawn in the sentence: and

as the young girls were sitting together on their bench on the lawn they heard coming toward them a clattering of hooves, the creaking of a chariot, the grating of wheels; belongs to Lady Gregory; of that I am so sure that it would be needless for me to refer to Kuno Meyer's version of the legend.

No light diadem of praise Yeats sets on Lady Gregory's brow when he says that she has discovered a speech, beautiful as that of Morris, and a living speech into the bargain. He continues, that as she moved among her people she learnt to love the beautiful speech of those who think in Irish, and to understand that it is as true a dialect of English as the dialect that Burns wrote in. But when we look into the beautiful speech that Lady Gregory learnt as she moved among her people, we find that it consists of no more than a dozen turns of speech, dropped into pages of English so ordinary, that redeemed from these phrases it might appear in any newspaper without attracting attention. And she does not seem to have inquired if the phrases she uses are merely local or part of the English language; she writes again and again a phrase which we find in *The Burial of Sir John Moore*, evidently under the impression that she is writing something extremely Irish:

That the foe and the stranger should tread o'er his head,
And we far away on the billow.

It would seem that in the opinion of many the line: And we far away on the billow, marks the poem as having been written by an Irishman, a careless criticism, for it is certain that the turn of speech referred to is to be found in Shakespeare, in Milton, in Morris, even in Dickens. It is heard in England in everyday speech,

though not so often as it is heard in Ireland, but it is heard, and it was a mistake on Lady Gregory's part to accept it as characteristically Irish. And her mistake shows how very little thought she gave to the question of idiomatic speech. She writes: he, himself, instead of omitting the parasitical he as she might very well have done. The omission would have suggested Ireland without any violation to the English language; and her attitude toward the verb to be is quite unconsidered and commonplace. She does not seem to have realised that in Ireland the verb to be is used to imply continuous action; and it seems to me very important to have noticed that Irish English and Provincial English preserve a distinction that has disappeared from English as spoken in polite society and taught at Oxford and Cambridge. Everybody in Ireland and a great many among the English middle classes still say: I shall be seeing So-and-so to-night and will tell him, etc., and everybody in Ireland and a great number among the English middle classes still say: Will you be having your letters sent on, which is surely richer English than: Will you have your letters sent on? My parlourmaid always says: Will you be dressing for dinner to-night? and: Will you be wearing your silk hat to-night? thereby distinguishing between a simple and a continuous future action. It is our parlourmaids and their likes that carry on these subtleties of tense, a much more important point than the aspiration of the letter h. I have heard of something called Extension Lectures at Oxford and Cambridge, but, without having the least notion of what is meant by extension lectures, I would suggest that some of the yeomen of Oxfordshire should be sent for to teach the professors, learned, no doubt, in the Latin and Greek languages, but who have no English.

But the efforts of the uneducated to teach the educated

would be made in vain; the English language is perishing and it is natural that it should perish with the race; race and grammatical sense go together. The English have striven and done a great deal in the world; the English are a tired race, and their weariness betrays itself in the language, and the most decadent of all are the educated classes. We say in Ireland: I am just after feeding the birds, and this is a richer phrase, faintly different from: I have just fed the birds. All these delicate shades have dropped out of modern English; they still exist in the language but they are no longer used, they are slightly archaic to-day or provincial; and the source wherefrom the language is refreshed—rural English—is being destroyed by Board-schools. God help the writer who puts pen to paper in fifty years' time, for all that will be left of the language will be a dry shank-bone that has been lying a long while on the dust-heap of empire.

The difference between rural and urban speech should have been studied by Lady Gregory, but we fear she has not given a thought to it; she was just content to pepper her page with a few idiomatic turns of speech which she very often does not use correctly. It is what I think, said Ferogain, that it is the fire of Conaire, the High King, and I would be glad he not to be there to-night, for it would be a pity if harm would come on him or his life be shortened, for he is a branch in its blossom. To my ear—and I come from the same country as Lady Gregory—this is not living speech. What the Galway, and I may add the Mayo, peasant would say is: And it's glad I'd be if he wasn't there to-night. We read on and at the end of about ten lines we come upon: What use will it be I to speak to him? And then her pen fills up another page before she thinks it necessary to drop in:

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A welcome before you, a pretty phrase which may be idiom, though I have never heard it in either Mayo or Galway. We turn the leaves and catch sight of: And it's you have what all the men of Ulster are wanting in. If we continued a little further it is quite possible we should come upon: And they do be saying, and: It is what I think, but we should not meet anywhere in the book an attempt to make, to mould, or to fashion a language out of the idiom of the Galway peasant, and it is astonished I am altogether that Yeats could have brought himself to compare this patchwork to the beautiful speech of Morris or of Burns, and to speak of the manuscripts that were consulted, for Lady Gregory says herself in her preface that she cannot read the manuscripts, but has translated from the French and German versions of the stories. And it is mighty hard to know how he could have reconciled himself to the adaptation of barbaric tales to the drawing-room. He must have often said to himself: She wouldn't bowdlerise the Bible in the interests of the drawing-room. And the constant repetition of a phrase like: And it wasn't a chair they gave him but a stool, and it not in the corner, must have ended by boring him, for no one is so easily bored by the repetition of a phrase as Yeats; it must have been that phrase that drove him out of Coole and sent him off again in pursuit of the golden-haired Isolde, whom, perhaps, the poet missed or found in Brittany or in Passy.

And it was on one of those journeys that he discovered Synge, a man of such rough and uncultivated aspect that he looked as if he had come out of Derrinrush. He was not a peasant as Yeats first supposed, but came, like all great writers, from the middle classes; his mother had a house in Kingstown which he avoided as much as possible, and it was in the Rue d'Arras that Yeats found him, *dans une chambre meublée* on the fifth floor. He was on his way

back to Ireland, and might stay at Kingstown for a while, till his next quarter's allowance came in (he had but sixty pounds a year), but as soon as he got it he would be away to the West, to the Arran Islands. Yeats gasped; and it was the romance of living half one's life in the Latin Quarter and the other half in the Arran Islands that captured Yeats's imagination. He must have lent a willing ear to Synge's tale of an unpublished manuscript, a book which he had written about the Arran Islands; but his interest in it doubtless flagged when Synge told him that it was not written in peasant speech. Synge must have answered: But peasant speech in Arran is Irish. Yeats remembered with regret that this was so, for he would have preferred Anglo-Irish; and he listened to Synge telling him that he had some colloquial knowledge of the Irish language. He had had to pick up a little Irish; life in Arran would be impossible without Irish and Yeats awoke from his meditation.

This strange Irishman was a solitary, who only cared to talk with peasants, and was interested in things rather than ideas. In the Rue d'Arras it must have been Yeats that did all the admiration, and Synge must have been a little bored, but quite willing that Yeats should discover in him a man of genius, a strange experience for Synge, who, however convinced he was inly of his own genius, must have wondered how Yeats had divined it, for Yeats had not pretended to feel any interest in the articles on French writers that Synge had sent round to the English Press, adding thereby sometimes a few pounds to his income, but only sometimes, for these articles were so trite that they were seldom accepted; John Eglinton confesses once a year that he could not stomach the article that Synge sent to him for publication in *Dana*; and they were so incorrectly written that Best who knew Synge in the

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Rue d'Arras tells that he used to go over them, for Synge could not write correctly at that time. Only one out of three was accepted, and the one that came to *Dana* no doubt came with all the edges worn by continual transmission through the post. It is Best that should write about Synge, for he helped him to furnish his room in the Rue d'Arras; Synge was very helpless in the actual affairs of life; he could not go out and buy furniture; Best had to go with him, and they brought home a mattress and some chairs and a bed on a barrow, and then returned to fetch the rest. There was a fiddle hanging on the wall of the garret in the Rue d'Arras, but as Synge never played it, Best began to wonder if Synge could play, and as if suspecting Best of disbelief in his music, Synge took it down one evening and drew the bow across the strings in a way that convinced Best, who played the fiddle himself; and, as if satisfied, he returned the fiddle to its nail, saying that he only played it in the Arran Islands in the evenings when the peasants wanted to dance. They have no ear for music, he said, and do not recognise a melody. What! exclaimed Best. Only as they recognise the cry of a bird or animal, not as a musician. Only the beat of the jig enters their ears, Best replied in a voice tinged with melancholy.

In Yeats's imagination, playing the fiddle to the Arran Islanders, and reciting poems to them, are one and the same thing, and he recognised instantly in Synge the Gleeman that was in himself, but had remained, and would remain for ever, unrealised; and his imagination caught fire at the conjunction of the Rue d'Arras and the Arran Islands. And whosoever has followed this narrative so far can see Yeats leaning forward in Synge's chair, getting more and more interested in him at every moment, his literary passions rising till they carried him to his feet and set

him walking about the dusty carpet from the window to the table at which Synge worked, crying: Come to Ireland and write folk-plays for me. A play about Arran.

But the play I've shown you——

Is of no account. The language will help you to know your own people.

And, better than any description, this dialogue represents the meeting of Yeats and Synge in the Rue d'Arras, Synge's large impassive face into which hardly any light of expression ever came, listening to Yeats with a look of perplexity moving over its immobility, and Yeats's passion, purely literary, steadily mounting. You must come back and perfect yourself in the language; you must live among the people again, he reports himself to have said. You must come to Ireland. A theatre is building in Dublin for the production of folk-plays, or soon will be building; and he told Synge how Miss Horniman, a lady of literary tastes and ample income, had decided to give to Dublin what no other city in an English-speaking country possessed—a subventioned theatre. Write me an Arran play. We will open the theatre with it; and he began to speak of Synge's immediate return to Arran. I should die, Synge is reported to have answered. Not before you have written the masterpiece, Yeats answered, and he continued day after day to subjugate Synge's mind, till one Saturday evening, after a talk lasting till long past midnight, Synge declared his adherence to the new creed of living speech.

When a man's mind is made up, his feet must set out on the way, Yeats replied. Synge acquiesced, and when he had received two little cheques which were due to him for articles, he folded his luggage according to promise, and a few days after presented himself at the Nassau Hotel, and was introduced to Lady Gregory, who en-

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couraged him to confide in her; and he told her the story of his health, and she very kindly took his part against Yeats, who was all for Arran, not for the middle island, for there only Irish is spoken. And the dialect is what we want. That may be, Mr. Yeats, but Mr. Synge may not be able to stand the climate in the autumn. And she turned to Synge, who told her that the best time would be a little later, when the people would be out digging in their potato fields. Lady Gregory agreed that this was so, and after some demur Yeats yielded, as he always does to Lady Gregory, and the three were of one mind that the mild climate of Wicklow was suitable to Synge's health, and also to the study of living speech, for the tinkers met in Wicklow in the autumn, Yeats cried. You mustn't miss the gathering. And a few days later Synge wrote that he had been fortunate enough to fall in with a band of tinkers. He had heard a tall, lean man cry after a screaming girl: Black Hell to your sowl! you've followed me so far, you'll follow me to the end! And driving their shaggy ponies and lean horses up a hillside, the tinkers made for their annual assemblage, exchanging their wives and arranging the roads they were to take, the signs to be left at the cross-roads, the fairs they were to attend, and the meeting-places for the following year. But this was not all the good news. Synge had gained the good-will of a certain tinker and his wife, and was learning their life and language as they strolled along the lanes, cadging and stealing as they went, squatting at eventide on the side of a dry ditch. Like a hare in a gap he listened, and when he had mastered every turn of their speech he left the tinker and turned into the hills, spending some weeks with a cottager, joining a little later another group of tinkers accompanied by a servant-girl who had suddenly wearied of scrubbing and

mangling, boiling for pigs, cooking, and working dough, and making beds in the evening. It would be better, she had thought, to lie under the hedgerow; and in telling me of this girl, Synge seemed to be telling me his own story. He, too, disliked the regular life of his mother's house, and preferred to wander with the tinkers, and when tired of them to lie abed smoking with a peasant, and awake amid the smells of shag and potato-skins in the sieve in the corner of the room. In answer to an inquiry how the day passed in the cottage, he told me that after breakfast he scrambled over a low wall out of which grew a single hawthorn, and looked round for a place where he might loosen his strap, and when that job was done he kept on walking ahead thinking out the dialogue of his plays, modifying it at every stile after a gossip with some herdsmen or pig-jobber, whomever he might meet, returning through the cold spring evening, when the stars shine brightly through the naked trees, licking his lips, appreciating the fine flavour of some drunkard's oath or blasphemy.

Yeats was at this time in the hands of the Fays and a Committee, and the performances of the National Theatre were given in different halls; and when Synge came up from the country to read *Riders to the Sea* to the company, Yeats, who did not wish to have any misunderstanding on the subject, cried: Sophocles! across the table, and, fearing that he was not impressive enough, he said: No, Æschylus! And that same afternoon he said to me in Grafton Street: I would I were as sure of your future and of my own as I am of Synge's. Irishmen, he said, had written well before Synge, but they had written well by casting off Ireland; but Synge was the first man that Ireland had inspired; and I asked if he were going to find his fortune in Ireland, his literary fortune, for *The Well*

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of the Saints had very nearly emptied the Abbey Theatre. We were but twenty in the stalls: the Yeats family, Sarah Purser, William Bailey, John Eglinton, Æ, Longworth, and dear Edward, who supported the Abbey Theatre, though he was averse from peasant plays. All this sneering at Catholic practices is utterly distasteful to me, he said to me. I can hear the whining voice of the proselytiser through it all. I never will go against my opinions, and when I hear the Sacred Name I assure you — You mean the name of God, Edward, don't you? I never like to mention it. The Sacred Name is enough. But if you are speaking French you say *Mon Dieu* at every sentence. If it isn't wrong in one language, how can it be wrong in another? A smile trickled across Edward's face, round and large and russet as a ripe pumpkin, and he muttered: *Mon ami Moore, mon ami Moore.*

He was in the Abbey the first night of the *Playboy*, and on my return from Paris he told me that though the noise was great, he had heard enough blasphemy to keep him out of the theatre thenceforth, and next morning he had read in the papers that Ireland had been exhibited in a shameful light as an immoral country. And oddly enough, the scene of the immorality is your own native town, George. He told me that the hooting had begun about the middle of the third act at the words: If all the women of Mayo were standing before me, and they in their—— He shrank from completing the sentence, and muttered something about the evocation of a disgusting spectacle.

I agree with you, Edward, that shift evokes a picture of blay calico; but the delightful underwear of Madame—— Now, George.

And then, amused at his own folly, which he can no

more overcome than anybody else, he began to laugh, shaking like a jelly, puffing solemnly all the while at his churchwarden.

The indignation was so great that I thought sometimes the pit was going to break in. Lower the bloody curtain, and give us something we bloody well want, a crowded pit kept on shouting. And looking at Edward I imagined I could see him in the stalls near the stage, turning round in terror, his face growing purpler and purpler. All the same, he said, though the pain that Synge's irreverent remarks caused me is very great, I disapprove altogether of interrupting a performance. But Yeats shouldn't have called in the police. A nationalist should never call for the police.

But, Edward, supposing a housebreaker forces his way in here or into Tillyra?

He said that that was different, and after wasting some time in discussion regarding the liberty of speech and the rights of property, he asked me if I had read the play, and I told him that on reading about the tumult in the Abbey Theatre I had telegraphed from Paris for a copy, and that the first lines convinced me that Ireland had at last begotten a masterpiece—the first lines of Pegeen Mike's letter to Mr. Michael O'Flaherty, general dealer, in Castlebar, for six yards of stuff for to make a yellow gown, a pair of boots with lengthy heels on them and brassy eyes, a hat suited for a wedding day, a fine-tooth comb. Never was there such a picture of peasant life in a few lines; and at every sentence my admiration increased. At the end of the act I cried out: A masterpiece! a masterpiece! Of course, they felt insulted. The girls coming in with presents for the young stranger pleased me, but a cold wind of doubt seemed to blow over the pages when the father came on the stage, a bloody

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bandage about his head, and—Edward—you're asleep!

No, I'm listening.

So clearly did I see disaster in that bloody bandage that I could hardly read through the third act. But you see nothing in the play.

Yes, I do, only it's a little thing. Shawn Keogh is a very good character, and the Widow Quinn is not bad either.

But the language, Edward?

You have made up your mind that this play is a masterpiece, but I am not going to give in to you.

But the style, Edward?

It isn't English. I like the Irish language and the English language, but I don't like the mixture; and then puffing at his pipe for a few seconds he said: I like the intellectual drama.

The conversation turned upon Ibsen, and we talked pleasantly until one in the morning, and then bidding him good-night I returned to Ely Place, delighted at my own perspicacity, for there could be no doubt that it was the bloody bandage that caused the row in the Abbey Theatre. The language is beautiful, but—— I had admitted to Edward that I had only glanced through the third act, and Edward had answered: If you had read the whole of it you might be of my opinion. It wasn't likely that Edward and I should agree about the *Playboy*, but it might well be that I was judging it hurriedly, and it would have been wiser, I reflected, to have read the play through before attempting to explain why the humour of the audience had changed suddenly, and I resolved to read the play next morning. But my dislike of reading is so great that I overlooked it, and when Yeats came to see me, instead of the praise which he had come to hear, and which he was craving for, he heard some rather vain

dissertations and only half-hearted praise. Again my impulsiveness was my ruin. The play would have been understood if it had been read carefully, and the evening would have been one of exaltation, whereas it went by mournfully, Yeats in the chimney-corner listening to suggestions that would preserve the comedy note. He went away depressed, saying, however, that it would be as well that I should write to Synge about his play, since I liked the greater part. But he did not think that Synge would make any alterations. And the letter I sent to Synge was superficial. I hope he destroyed it. He was glad that his play had pleased me, but he could not alter the third act. It had been written again and again—thirteen times. That is all I remember of his letter, interesting on account of the circumstances in which it was written and the rarity of Synge's correspondence. It is a pity his letter was destroyed and no copy kept; our letters would illuminate the page that I am now writing, exhibiting us both in our weakness and our strength—Synge in his strength, for if the play had been altered we should have all been disgraced, and it was Yeats's courage that saved us in Dublin. He did not argue, he piled affirmation upon affirmation, and he succeeded in the end . . . but we will not anticipate.

But if Dublin would not listen to the *Playboy*, Dublin read the text; edition after edition was published, and we talked the *Playboy* round our firesides. How we talked! Week after week, month after month, the Abbey Theatre declining all the while, till at last the brothers Fay rose in revolt against Yeats's management, accusing him of hindering the dramatic movement by producing no plays except those written by his intimate friends. Yeats repelled the accusation by offering to submit those that he had rejected to the judgment of Professor Tyrrell,

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a quite unnecessary concession on the part of Yeats, for Willie Fay is but an amusing Irish comedian, and it was presumptuous for him and his brother to set themselves against a poet. They resigned, and one night Yeats came to me with the grave news that the Fays had seceded.

I feel I must talk to somebody, he said, flinging himself into a chair.

Æ is the only man who can distribute courage, but Yeats and Æ were no longer friends, and I was but a poor purveyor. It is true that I told him, and without hesitation, that the secession of the Fays was a blessing in disguise, and that now he was master in his own house the Abbey Theatre would begin to flourish, and it would have been well if I had confined myself to pleasant prophesying; but very few can resist the temptation to give good advice. One thing, Yeats, I have always had in mind, but never liked to tell you! it is that the way you come down the steps from the stage and stride up the stalls and alight by Lady Gregory irritates the audience, and if you will allow me to be perfectly frank, I will tell you that she is a little too imposing, too suggestive of Corinne or Madame de Staël. Corinne and Madame de Staël were one and the same person, weren't they? But you don't know, Yeats, do you? And so I went on pulling the cord, letting down volumes of water upon poor Yeats, who crouched and shivered. The water, always cold, was at times very icy, for instance when I said that his dreams of reviving Jonson's *Volpone* must be abandoned. If you aren't very careful, Yeats, the Academic idea will overgrow the folk.

And Yeats went away overwhelmed, and I saw no more of him for many months, not until it became known that Synge's persistent ill-health had at last brought him to

a private hospital, where he lay waiting an operation. He lives by the surgeon's knife, Yeats said to me, and I welcomed his advice to save myself from the anguish of going to see a man dying of cancer. And while Synge perished slowly Gogarty recovered in the same hospital after an operation for appendicitis. One man's scale drops while another goes up. As I write this line I can see Synge, whom I shall never see again with my physical eyes, sitting thick and straight in my armchair, his large, uncouth head, and flat, ashen-coloured face with two brown eyes looking at me, not unsympathetically. A thick, stubbly growth of hair starts out of a strip of forehead like black twigs out of the head of a broom. I see a ragged moustache, and he sits bolt upright in my chair, his legs crossed, his great country shoe spreading over the carpet. The conversation about us is of literature, but he looks as bored as Jack Yeats does in the National Gallery. . . . Synge and Jack Yeats are like each other in this, neither takes the slightest interest in anything except life, and in their own deductions from life; educated men, both of them, but without aesthetics, and Yeats's stories that Synge read the classics and was a close student of Racine is a piece of Yeats's own academic mind. Synge did not read Racine oftener than Jack Yeats looks at Titian, and no conclusion should be drawn from the fact that among his scraps of verse are to be found translations from Villon and Marot; they are merely exercises in versification; he was curious to see if Anglo-Irish idiom could be used in poetry. Villon wrote largely in the slang of his time, therefore Villon was selected; and whosoever reads Villon dips into Marot and reads *Une Ballade à Double Refrain*. And that is all, for, despite his beautiful name, Marot is an insipid poet. I am sorry that Yeats fell into the mistake of attributing much read-

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ing to Synge; he has little love of character and could not keep himself from putting rouge on Synge's face and touching up his eyebrows. He showed greater discrimination when he said: You will never know as much about French poetry as Arthur Symons. Come to Ireland and write plays for me. And for his great instinct we must forgive him his little sins of reason. He very rightly speaks of Synge as a solitary, and it is interesting to speculate what made him a solitary. Was it the sense that death was lurking round the corner always, and the sense that he possessed no social gifts, that helped to drive him out into the Arran Islands where he knew nobody, and to the Latin Quarter behind the Luxembourg Gardens where nobody knew him? A man soon perceives if he is interested in others and if others are interested in him, and if he contributes nothing and gets nothing, he will slink away as Synge did.

It seemed a cruel fate that decreed that Synge must die before his play could be revived in Dublin, but his fate was cruel from the beginning. Yeats tells me that these lines were found among his papers: I am five-and-twenty to-day; I wonder will the five-and-twenty years before me be as unhappy as those I have passed through. He received Yeats's belief in his genius, and that was all he got from life. He wrote but little, but that little was his own: *Mon verre n'est pas grand, mais je bois dans mon verre*. His last strength he reserved for *Deirdre*, working at the play whenever he could, determined to finish it before he died. But he wrote slowly, and the disease moved quickly from cell to cell, and before the last writing was accomplished Synge laid aside the pen and resigned himself to death. It is curious that he should have met his old friend Best on his way to the hospital. Best tells these things significantly. He asked Synge if

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he were going in for an operation. Synge answered no; and when Best called to see him in the hospital, he found Synge clinging to a little hope, though he knew there was none, saying that people often got better when nobody expected them to get better; and he seemed to experience some disappointment when Best did not answer promptly that that was so.

He used to speak of *Deirdre* as his last disappointment; but another awaited him. An hour before he died he asked the nurse to wheel his bed into a room whence he could see the Wicklow mountains, the hills where he used to go for long solitary walks, and he was wheeled into the room, but the mountains could not be seen from the windows; to see them it was necessary to stand up, and Synge could not stand or sit up in his bed, so his last wish remained ungratified, and he died with tears in his eyes.

VIII

Synge's death seems to have done him a great deal of good; he was not cold in his grave when his plays began to sell like hot cakes and a complete edition of his writings was contemplated, comprising the plays and his Wicklow Sketches and The Blasket Islands; the newspaper articles that he had written upon the French poets were sought for and discovered, and, what was still more important, Yeats decreed a revival of the *Playboy* at the Abbey. We were all agog and prayed that the play would be allowed to pass without protest; it seemed very likely that this would be permitted, for Synge's success had sobered Dublin, especially its journalists. A sad thing it is for a journalist to find the play that he has described as contemptible, as an insult to Ireland, accepted

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by all the world as a masterpiece, and the newspaper that smells like a musty sacristy held its peace, or only sent one poor little voice to utter a faint squeak in the gallery from time to time. The play was the same, the text was the same, the cast was the same with one exception. The part of the Playboy was entrusted to Fred O'Donovan, and thereby hangs a tale that I should like to tell.

Synge had written the play knowing that the part of Christy Mahon was going to be played by Willie Fay, a little man five feet three or four; allusions to his size had crept into the text, and Willie Fay, who is a true artist, had exhibited Christy Mahon in the condition of a wayfarer who had been wandering for at least a fortnight, sleeping in a barn when he could find an open door, and a dry ditch when he could not find a barn, and if Willie Fay had been a broad-shouldered, stalwart, fine young fellow, he might have carried the illusion so far as to send some whiffs of Christy across the footlights. But his diminutive appearance, and the very qualities which made him so admirable an exponent of the part of Michael O'Dowd in *The Well of the Saints* were against him in the *Playboy*. An actor's stock-in-trade is his personality, and Fay's personality is of the crab-apple kind, and it was necessary that the story that Christy had to tell should be told with an engaging simplicity; the audience must sympathise with the son whom the father persecuted because he would not marry an old woman; the audience must see the father raise the scythe, and poor Christy the loy, to defend himself. The father is cloven by the loy, but that is an accident. I did not see Willie Fay in the part, but it is easy to imagine how his reading would alienate the sympathy of the audience. He might point to certain passages which would support his reading; no doubt he could; but these are not the passages that should

be brought into light. It just comes to this, that no man living can play the two parts, the Playboy and the blind man in *The Well of the Saints*, any more than any man can play Hamlet and Othello satisfactorily. A different personality is required, and Fred O'Donovan is a well-favoured young man whom any girl would like for his appearance, and he told the story of how he had killed his father, simply, almost innocently, as an unfortunate accident that had happened to him, and Pegeen Mike pitied him. He was no doubt occasionally against the words, but that was unavoidable; the part cannot be played any other way. A few phrases were dropped out here and there; in the second act the bandage was no longer blood-stained, and in the third, when Christy went out to kill his father for the second time, the father came in on all-fours; this kept the comedy note, which was in danger of being lost, for Pegeen Mike is very angry with Christy in the third act, believing him to be a mere braggart—the weak spot in the play, but it passes rapidly; and it was interesting to speak about it to Miss Maire O'Neill, who played Pegeen Mike out of a very clear vision of the character and with all the finish of a true artist.

However we look at it, I said, it is difficult to see how Pegeen Mike could have brought the peat from the fire to burn her lover's feet, and three minutes after rush to the door to watch his leaving her for ever; going away with his father back to their own countryside. Miss O'Neill said she didn't think she could speak the words so that the audience would understand that her anger against Christy was simulated. Well, imperfection is often a zest, I answered, and left the theatre thinking that Fate had allowed Synge to accomplish very little; two one-act plays, purely tentative, a three-act play upon an old

theme, *The Tinker's Wedding*, and a dramatic version of the legend of *Deirdre*, which it would have been well for me to have read before writing this page, for the printed page alone is veracious; our ears, however quick, cannot take in the whole of a play. But the book is not on the table, nor in the house, nor at the bookseller's round the corner, and it is well that it isn't, for it is pleasant sometimes to believe that one's ears are trustworthy, and, amid my aural experiences, I have none more agreeable than the music of the dialogue about Naisi's grave, though memory recalls but one tiny phrase: Death is a poor untidy thing. The writing of *Deirdre* in peasant speech was Yeats's idea; and the text bears witness that when Synge had written an act he began to feel that peasant speech is unsuited to tragedy. Only the second and third acts are of much account, only these are finished, and to finish the first act Synge would have had to redeem it from peasant speech, ridiculous and out of place at the court of Kings, though the Kings be but shepherd Kings.¹ There is less idiom in the second act than in the first, and none at all in the third; and when I mentioned these things to Yeats he told me that Synge had begun to weary of the limitations of peasant speech. . . . It is difficult to imagine Synge writing about the middle classes and their tea-parties, or the upper classes and their motor cars, and we may exercise our wits trying to discover the turn his talent would have taken, but it is more practical to tell how Lady Gregory came to the rescue of the Abbey Theatre and saved it after the secession of the Fays.

She could write easily and well, and had shown aptitude for writing rural anecdotes in dialogue, and it is an open secret that she was Yeats's collaborator in the *Pot of Broth*

¹ Yeats should not have forgotten that Kiltartan was not spoken when *Deirdre* prophesied.

and in *Cathleen ni Houlihan*; and feeling that the fate of the movement depended upon her, she undertook the great responsibility of keeping the theatre open with her pen, writing play after play, three or four a year, writing in the space of ten years something like thirty plays. And is there one among us who would undertake such a job of work and accomplish it as well as Lady Gregory? The plays that flowed from her pen so rapidly are not of equal merit, nor is there any one that compares with the *Playboy*, but all are meritorious, all are conceived and written in the same style. She is herself in her little plays, a Galway woman telling rural anecdotes that amuse her woman's mind, and telling them gracefully, never trying to philosophise, to explain, but just content to pick her little flower, to place it in a vase for our amusement, and to go on to another flower. *The Rising of the Moon* is a very pretty bit of artless dramatic writing, with a fine folk flavour, hardly written, told as the people would tell it by their firesides. *Hyacinth Halvey* has been played all over the world with success; and one must not look too scornfully at success; a certain measure is necessary in a theatre. *Spreading the News* is even more natural than *The Rising of the Moon*; it is just the gossip of a village thrown easily into dramatic form. Nobody could have done Lady Gregory's plays as well as she did them herself, and *The Workhouse Ward* must not be forgotten, a trifle somewhat sentimental, but just what was wanted to carry on the Abbey Theatre, which, for a moment, could do very well without the grim humours of Synge. We must get it into our heads that the Abbey Theatre would have come to naught but for Lady Gregory's talent for rolling up little anecdotes into one-act plays. She has written three-act plays, but her art and her humour and her strength rarely carry her beyond a one-act. The best

of her three-act plays is probably *The Image*, in which she sets a whole village prattling; the characters go on talking about very little, yet always talking pleasantly, and we go away pleasantly amused and pleasantly weary. The telling of *The Jackdaw* is a little confused, but whosoever writes thirty plays in ten years will sometimes be sprightly, sometimes confused, sometimes languid, and will sometimes choose subjects that cannot very well be written. She has told that she wrote plays in the first instance because she believed it to be her duty to write for the Abbey Theatre, and afterwards, no doubt, took an interest in the writing for its own sake, and in this her story nowise differs from many another's, chance playing in our lives a greater part than we would care to admit. She never would have written a play if she had not met Yeats, nor would Synge, who is now looked upon as an artist as great as Donatello or Benvenuto Cellini, and perhaps I should not have gone to Ireland if I had not met Yeats; and if I had not gone to Ireland I should not have written *The Lake* or *The Untilled Field*, or the book I am now writing.

So all the Irish movement rose out of Yeats and returns to Yeats. He wrote beautiful lyrics and narrative poems from twenty till five-and-thirty, and then he began to feel that his mission was to give a literature to Ireland that should be neither Hebrew, nor Greek, nor French, nor German, nor English—a literature that should be like herself, that should wear her own face and speak with her own voice, and this he could do only in a theatre. We have all wanted repertory theatres and art theatres and literary theatres, but these words are vain words and mean nothing. Yeats knew exactly what he wanted; he wanted a folk theatre, for if Ireland were ever to produce any literature he knew that it would have to begin in folk,

and he has his reward. Ireland speaks for the first time in literature in the Abbey Theatre.

IX

But my thoughts have begun to wander from Synge and Lady Gregory and Yeats to all the critics who have complained that in this book, instead of creating types of character like Esther Waters or Dick Lennox, I have wasted my time describing my friends, mere portrait-painting. But was not Dick Lennox Dick Maitland? And in writing *Esther Waters* did I not think of one heroic woman? We all have models, and if we copy the model intelligently, a type emerges. In writing *Patience*, Gilbert thought he was copying Oscar Wilde, whereas he was drawing Willie Yeats out of the womb of Time; and when Flaubert wrote *Bouvard and Pecuchet* he thought he was creating, but he was really performing the same kind offices for Plunkett and Gill, giving them names much more significant than the names they are known by in Ireland, but doing no more. A letter from Plunkett regretting that a broken leg prevented him from being present at the great dinner at the Shelbourne Hotel has been alluded to, and he was whirled rapidly before the reader's eyes as he repaired on an outside car to an agricultural meeting with Yeats, but no portrait of him has appeared, and the reader has not heard how we became acquainted. It was dear Edward who brought the meeting about, overriding Plunkett, who is a timid man, and fears to meet any one with a sense of humour; he dreads laughter as a cat dreads cold water. But Edward insisted. You are both public men and you cannot avoid knowing each other sooner or later, and now is the moment for you both to take the plunge.

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And one evening at the end of a long summer's day a lean man of medium height, courteous and dignified, clearly of the Protestant ascendancy, came forward through the dusk of a drawing-room—the lamps had just been lighted—to thank me for having accepted his invitation to dinner. I liked his well-designed oval face, his scanty beard, and his eyes pleasantly grey and pleasantly perplexed. A long, straight, well-formed nose divided the face, and a broad strip of forehead lay underneath the brown stubbly crop of hair that covered a small round skull. The arrival of a guest obliged him to turn away, but before doing so he shook hands with me a second time, and in this supplementary handshake it seemed to me that that something which is genuine in him had passed into his hand. What is in the mind transpires in the hand; and this is quite natural, and it is still more natural that what is not in the mind should not transpire in the hand. There is no grip in Gill's hand; one remembers its colour and its dangle, that is all; and his manner, though pleasing, is flimsy; not that Plunkett's manners are hard and disagreeable; on the contrary, they are rather soft and affable. But there is something pathetic in him which strikes one at first in the brow, in the grey eyes under it, and all over the flat face marked with a prominent nose, and in the hesitancy of his speech, which straggles with his beard, and his exclamation: Er—er—er, without which he cannot speak half a dozen words.

So much did I see of Plunkett in the red twilight, with glimpses through it of silken gowns, of shoulders and arms, all effaced, a dim background. One felt on entering his room that his dinner was not a sexual one. Everybody seemed anxious to speak on what is known as serious subjects, but restrained himself out of deference to the gowns. But as soon as sex had retired cigars were lighted

and important matters were on the verge of discussion. Plunkett was visibly relieved, and with brightening face he began to talk. He talked rapidly, he broke down, now he lost the thread and sought for it: Er—er—er, the uneconomic man in his economic holding, er—er—er, is a danger to the State, and the economic man in his uneconomic holding, er—er—er, is probably a greater danger, and to relieve the producer of the cost of distribution is the object of the Co-operative movement. It seemed to me that we could have discovered what he was saying in any sixpenny text-book, but Plunkett was so interested that it is not likely he perceived he was boring the company and me.

Plunkett, I said to myself, is one of those men whose genius is in practical work, and who, in order to obtain foundation for his work, seeks blindly for first principles; as soon as we get to practical work he will talk quite differently. And I looked forward to questioning him on matters about which I had definite information. But as I was about to speak, a pallid parliamentarian, whose name I have forgotten, weary like myself of the economic man and the uneconomic holding, turned to me to get news of O'Brien, whose headquarters were in the County of Mayo, thinking that as I came from that part of the country, I should be able to tell him something regarding the chances of an anti-grazing movement. It so happened that I had had that morning a long talk with my agent about Mayo, and forgetful for the moment of my intention to question Plunkett about the egg industry, overborne by a desire to escape from platitudes, I began to repeat all I had heard, saying I could vouch for the facts, my agent being an old friend on whose veracity and accuracy of observation I could depend. The parliamentarian leaned forward anxious to get the truth from me, and whatever

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information might be picked up on the way, to pad his speeches for the next session; and perhaps what I was saying, by force of contrast with Plunkett's generalities, attracted the attention of those present, and as they leaned forward interested to hear some facts the humour of the situation began to tickle me. The absent O'Brien had become the centre of interest, and a cloud of melancholy appeared in Plunkett's face, his mechanical smile broke down, he seemed troubled and irritated. Then, I thought, it is really true that he delights in his talk of the economic man and the uneconomic holding—er—er—er, and *vice versa*; and I began to doubt if Nature in her endless discrepancies had really created such a discrepancy as I had imagined: a practical man unable to get to practical work before drinking platitudes from a sixpenny textbook. By this time my knowledge of O'Brien's movement was exhausted, and I should have been pleased to change the subject, but the parliamentarian was insistent, and had it not been for the intervention of Plunkett I should not have been able to rid myself of him. But Plunkett, unable to endure rivalry with O'Brien for another moment, turned to the pallid parliamentarian, saying that in two or three years his co-operative followers would be masters of all local assemblies, and he spoke in such a way as to lead the gentleman to understand that enough had been said about O'Brien.

At last my chance seemed to have come to get a word with Plunkett regarding the details of his scheme for the regeneration of Ireland. I was at that time interested in a Co-operative Egg Society, which had been started at Plunkett's instigation by my brother, who had discovered, after a little experience, that more extended business arrangements were necessary if the profits were to cover the expenses; and knowing more of this matter

than I did about O'Brien's anti-grazing movement I moved up toward Plunkett, anxious to hear his opinion and to try and induce him to modify the measures he was taking for spreading these societies all over the country. At the mention of the blessed word co-operation Plunkett's face brightened, and he began to discuss the subject, but in general terms, more, it seemed to me, for the edification of the parliamentarian than for any practical purpose. As I knew from my brother all about the general theory and only wanted to study its application, I returned to the details again and again, going into figures, showing how the system could not be carried out exactly as Plunkett had dreamed it, and having some experience about the conveying of eggs from Pulborough to London (they arrived nearly always broken; true that the South Coast Railway paid for the breakage without murmuring; all the same it was annoying to have one's eggs broken), I tried to learn from him if more reliance could be placed upon Irish railways.

One cannot discuss, I remember him saying, the fate of the individual egg.

But, Plunkett, your whole system rests on the individual egg, a fact which he could not contravene and so he became melancholy again. Nothing, I said to myself, bores him so much as detail. He loves dreaming, like every other Irishman; and we did not see each other for many a month until we met in Gill's rooms in Clare Street, or in the offices of the *Daily Express*, after the Boer War had driven me out of England. The *Daily Express* had been bought by Plunkett, or it had come into Plunkett's control, and Gill had been appointed editor, and feeling, I suppose, that it was necessary to redeem the *Express* from its sectarian tone, Gill dared one day to write of Dr. Walsh as the Archbishop of

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Dublin, causing a great uproar among the subscribers. An attack on the Great Southern Railway caused the withdrawal of a great advertisement; but nothing mattered so long as Plunkett and Gill succeeded in convincing Gerald Balfour that what Ireland needed was a new State Department of Agriculture and Art. Like all dreamers, Plunkett is an inveigling fellow, and he inveigled Gerald Balfour, and Gerald Balfour inveigled his brother, and his brother inveigled the ministry, and the end of all this inveigling was a grant of one hundred and seventy thousand a year to found a Department of Agriculture and Art in Ireland. But the inveigler had been inveigled; Gill's ambition stretched beyond mere agriculture; how Art was gathered into the scheme I do not know, probably as a mere make-weight; the mission of the Department was the reformation of Ireland, and, from end to end, the very task that Flaubert's heroes . . . but it would be well to tell my readers who were the heroes of this not very well-known book.

Bouvard and Pecuchet were two little city clerks, who became acquainted in a way that seemed marvellous to both of them. It was their wont to seek a certain bench after dinner, and to spend what remained of their dinner-hour watching the passers-by. One day they took off their hats to mop their brows: Bouvard looked into Pecuchet's, Pecuchet looked into Bouvard's, both were amazed by the coincidence; they had gotten their hats from the same hatter! A great friendship arose out of this circumstance, the twain meeting every day, delighting more and more in each other's company; and when Bouvard inherits considerable wealth he renounces his clerkship and invites Pecuchet to come to live with him. The first thing to do is to get a fine *appartement*, but life in a flat becomes monotonous; they must perforce do something to relieve

the tedium of an unmeasured idleness; market gardening strikes their imagination, for a reason which I have forgotten, and having read the best books on the subject of vegetable growing they buy some land, but only to discover after considerable loss of money that the vegetables grown by their neighbours, ignorant peasants, are far better than theirs and cheaper. It is thirty years since I read *Bouvard and Pecuchet*, but nobody forgets the story of the melon. Bouvard and Pecuchet had learnt all the material facts about the growing of melons from books, and one would have thought that that was enough, but no; the melon is one of the most immoral of vegetables, and if great care be not taken it will contract incestuous alliances with uncles and aunts, sisters and brothers; and Bouvard and Pecuchet were not sufficiently concerned with the morals of their pet. They were content to watch it growing day after day bigger and bigger, exceeding the size of all melons; prodigious, gigantic, brobdingnagian, were the adjectives they murmured. At last the day came to cut the wonderful fruit. It was splendid on the table; it had all the qualities that a melon should have, all but one—it was uneatable. Bouvard spat his mouthful into the grate; Pecuchet spat his, I think, out of the window.

Bouvard and Pecuchet turn from agriculture to Druidic remains, and Pecuchet feels that his life would be incomplete without a love adventure. The serving-maid seems to him suitable to his enterprise; and having assurances of her purity from her, emboldened, he follows her into the wood-shed. A painful disease is the strange ending of this romance, and as soon as Pecuchet is restored to health the twain are inspired to write a tragedy. But having no knowledge of dramatic construction they send to Paris for books on the subject, and in these books they read of the faults that the critics have discovered in

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Shakespeare and Molière and Racine and other famous writers, and they resolve to avoid these faults. Pecuchet wanders from tragedy to Biblical criticism, and no one forgets the scene between him and Monsieur le Curé under a dripping umbrella. Biblical criticism is succeeded by another folly, and then by another; I do not remember the book in detail, but the best-established theories are always being overturned by the simplest fact.

This great book was described as an extravaganza by the critics of the time, and it was said that Flaubert's admiration of human stupidity was so great that he piled absurdity upon absurdity, exceeding the modesty of Nature; but nothing is so immodest as Nature, and when she picked up the theme suggested by Flaubert and developed it, human stupidity gave forth flowers that would have delighted and saddened him, saddened him, for it is difficult to imagine him writing his book if he had lived to watch the Department at work in Ireland. He would have turned away regretfully saying: I have been anticipated; Plunkett and Gill have transferred my dreams into real life; and he would have admitted that some of their experiments equalled those that he had in mind—for instance, the calf that the Department sent to the Cork Exhibition as an example of the new method of rearing calves.

Bouvard and Pecuchet (we will drop the Plunkett and Gill) invited all the Munster farmers to view the animal, and they had been impressed by its appearance, a fine happy beast it seemed to be; but very soon it began to droop, causing a good deal of anxiety, and the news of its death was brought one evening to the Imperial Hotel where Bouvard and Pecuchet were lodging. After a hurried consultation Pecuchet looked at his watch. We have several hours before us to find a similar calf. But,

Pecuchet, do you think that we are justified, er—er—er, in replacing a dead calf by a healthy one? At this question Pecuchet flamed a little. The honour of the Department is at stake, he said; we must think of the Department. The Department, er—er—er, is judged by its results. Again a light flamed into Pecuchet's eyes, and though he did not say it, it was clear that he looked upon the Department as something existing of and through itself which could not be judged by its mere works. There has been some foul play. Our enemies, he muttered, and sent a telegram to the expert of the Department to come down at once. A post-mortem was ordered, but no new fact was discovered, and the advice of the vet. was that the new method should be abandoned and the second calf be fed upon milk and linseed meal, and upon this natural diet it prospered exceedingly.

Bouvard and Pecuchet's experiments were not limited to teaching the finest herdsmen in the world how to raise cattle; it was necessary that they should spread themselves over the entire range of human activities in order to get rid of the one hundred and seventy thousand a year that the Department was receiving from the State. A good many hundred pounds were lost in a shoe factory in Ballina, but what are a few hundred pounds when one is dealing with one hundred and seventy thousand a year? And there were moments of sad perplexity in the lives of our reformers. A gleam came into Pecuchet's eyes. Have you thought of anything? said Bouvard, and Pecuchet answered that it had just occurred to him it would be a great advantage to Ireland and to the Department if a method could be discovered of turning peat into coal. These experiments will be costly, Pecuchet. How much do you think we can spend? Pecuchet was full of hope, but the factory turned out so complete and sudden a failure

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that it had to be closed at once. Oyster beds were laid in Galway and given in charge of a young man who had read all that had ever been written on the subject of oyster culture. The Colonel told me that he met him at a tennis party, and the charming young man, who was a great social advantage to the neighbourhood, explained to the Colonel that Portuguese oysters could only live three or four days in the creek; Whitstables could endure our waters a little longer. The French oyster, he said, is the shortest lived of all.

I thought, said the Colonel, that the object of the Department was to cultivate rather than to destroy oysters.

We are only experimenting; we must have facts, he answered, and next day on their way to the creek the Colonel said: There must be a drain hereabouts, and pointing to one flowing over the oyster beds, he added: I think this accounts for a great deal of the mortality in which you are experimenting. A gloom came into the young man's face and he promised to write up a report for the Department.

I think it was the fishing interests of Galway that next attracted the attention of Bouvard and Pecuchet. The fishermen were in sad need of piers, and the Department undertook the construction of some two or three, but a very few spring tides cast them hither and thither; some of them can still be reached at low tide, some show a few rocks out in the bay, and these are much appreciated by gannets in the breeding season.

Bouvard felt the disappearance of the piers deeply, and so did Pecuchet, but they found consolation in the thought that experimentation is the source of all knowledge, and one day Bouvard said to Pecuchet: Our staff is miserably underpaid. You are quite right, Bouvard, you are a rich man and can do without a salary, but for the honour of

the Department it seems to me that I should be placed on a level with the Under-Secretary; we must never forget that ours is a great State Department.

And the twain fell to thinking how some more money might be expended for the good of Ireland. The establishment of a bacon factory was considered, and the advantage lectures on the minding of pigs would be to the inhabitants of the west of Ireland. The egg and poultry industry might be greatly benefited by a little knowledge. Lecturers were sought and found, and they departed to instruct, and capons were imported from Surrey to improve the strains, and there was great lamentation at the end of the hatching season. Some wonderful letters reached the Department, strangely-worded letters from which I have room for only one sentence: Sorra cock was among the cocks you sent us. Pecuchet rang the bell, but the poultry expert was out at the time, and a deputation was waiting in the anteroom. After listening to all the evidence on the subject of cooking he agreed that the culinary utensils at the disposal of the peasant were antiquated, and it was arranged that ladies should be sent out; one arrived at Ballinrobe, and the peasants learnt from her how to make meringues. But meringues were a little beyond the reach of the peasants' bill-of-fare, and after a long correspondence with the Department the lecturers were ordered to substitute *macaroni au gratin*, and I remember a girl coming back from Ballinrobe bringing the dish with her, and her enthusiasm about it was the same as Bouvard's and Pecuchet's over the melon, and its success was the same as the melon's; one of the family spat it into the grate, another spat it out of the window. The Department had forgotten that Catholics do not like cheese.

Undeterred by such incidents as these, the wheels of

the Department grind on and on, reproducing all the events of Flaubert's book in every detail, but sooner or later Nature outstrips the human imagination, and Flaubert would have thrown up his arms in significant gesture if he were alive to hear the story of how Bouvard and Pecuchet decided one day to improve the breed of asses in Ireland.

The ass is an animal much used in Ireland by the peasant, Bouvard began; Pecuchet acquiesced, and during the course of the evening it was agreed that it would be a great advantage to the country if the Irish ass were improved. Books on the subject of the ass were sent for to London, and it was discovered that the Spanish asses were the finest of all, and Bouvard said to Pecuchet: We must import sires. Pecuchet hesitated, and with his usual instinct for compromise suggested Shetland ponies. Bouvard was of opinion that the Shetland pony was too small for the friendly ass, but Pecuchet said that there were in Kerry asses of a sufficient size, and a breed of small mules would be of great use in the mountainy districts. Bouvard pointed out that mules were sterile; Pecuchet referred Bouvard to *The Reminiscences of a Veterinary Surgeon*; and he read in this book that mules had been seen with foals. There was no case, however, of these foals having bred in their turn, so the mule must be said to be sterile in the second generation for certain. The mule is, moreover, a vicious animal, and Bouvard passed the book back to Pecuchet, and for one reason or another it was decided that the Department would be well advised to leave the mule alone and direct all its attention to the improvement of the ass.

What do you think, Pecuchet, of the Scotch ass?

Our importations from Scotland have been considerable lately.

You would like something Continental, Pecuchet. The Spanish ass, you will see, is highly recommended; but the sires are expensive; two hundred pounds are paid for the tall ass standing over fourteen hands high, and able to cover a sixteen-hands mare; and we should have to import at least fifty sires to affect visibly the Irish strain. You see that would be ten thousand pounds, and we could hardly risk so large an outlay. You will notice that the Egyptian ass is described as being smaller than the Spanish, altogether a lighter animal, and we could buy Egyptian sires for a hundred apiece; they run from seventy-five to a hundred pounds. We might get them cheaper still by taking a large number.

Pecuchet was in favour of a small commission that would take evidence regarding not only the Egyptian, but the Barbary and the Arabian ass, but this commission Bouvard pointed out would be a delay and an expense, and an order was sent to Alexandria to purchase asses. The Department of Agriculture in Ireland was anxious to buy sire asses, sure foal-getters, and the selection was confided to—whom? The archives of the Department would have to be searched for the name of the agent, a useless labour, for no blame attaches to him; his selection was approved by everybody, and the herd was much admired as it trotted and cantered through the morning sunlight on the way to the docks, beautiful little animals, alert as flies, shaking their ears and whisking their long, well-furnished tails, a sight to behold, as docile as they were beautiful, until they reached the gangway. But as soon as they were asked to step on board every one was equally determined to stay in his own country, and much pressure had to be used, and some accidents happened; but human energy prevailed; the asses were all shipped in the end, and it was thought that no untoward incident

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could happen, so admirable were the arrangements for their reception. Every ass had a stall to himself, and to make sure that there could be no mutual biting and kicking each one was barred in his stall. And it was this very bar that proved the undoing of Bouvard and Pecuchet's great experiment. The temper of the asses had already been tried, and they were now roused to such a stubbornness by the bar that they preferred to die rather than to stale without stretching themselves, and when the steamer put into Malta only seven were able to proceed down the gangway. The telegram that brought the news of the loss of ten asses set Bouvard and Pecuchet pondering.

Sea-sickness, I suppose, said Pecuchet.

It may have been home-sickness, Bouvard replied. Be that as it may, the seven must be landed at Marseilles, and a telegram with these instructions was sent to Malta. It reached there in time, but the boat was delayed by the breaking of a screw, and the grooms, unsuspecting of the reluctance of the asses to stale, again dropped the bars on their hind-quarters, with the result that one after another those grand asses burst their bladders, only one arriving at Marseilles, a forlorn and decrepit scarecrow ass that would not as much as look at the pretty white and black and brown asses that had come up from Kerry. He chased them with bared teeth out of his field. Pecuchet thought that a chestnut ass might tempt him, but the colour is rare among asses, and after a long search the task of finding one was given up as hopeless, the expert declaring that it was doubtful if even a chestnut ass would revive any of the fervour of old Nile in him: a gaunt, taciturn, solitary animal, that moved away from human and ass kind, a vicious unkempt brute that had once turned on Pecuchet; but he had sat on the fence

in time; a silent animal by day, and noisy at midnight, when Bouvard sat considering his book for Ireland. On the table by his side lay the *Different Methods of Famous Authors*, and learning from it that Byron wrote late at night and drank soda-water, Bouvard determined that he, too, would sit up late and drink soda water, but strange to relate, though his health declined, his book did not progress. His mind was teeming with ideas, but he found it very difficult to disentangle them, and adopted a new method of work. Balzac used to go to sleep early in the evening, and wake up at twelve and write all night and all day, drinking black coffee, but a very few days proved to Bouvard that his health was not equal to the strain, and he resolved to adopt another method. It was also stated in the *Different Methods of Great Authors* that Dumas was often glad to call in a collaborator, and this seemed an excellent idea, for what concerned Bouvard were not his rhythms but his ideas. Others could put his ideas into rhythms, and the help of all kinds of people was evoked. We used to hear a great deal about Bond, a German economist, and Coyne, a gentleman engaged in the Department, was entrusted with the task of gathering statistics. Memoranda of all kinds were piled up; a commission sent to Denmark to report on the working of Danish dairies came back with the information that the dairies in Denmark were kept remarkably clean. The Commission was accompanied by a priest, and he returned much shocked, as well he might be, for he had found no organised religion whatever in Denmark. One day a chapter was sent round and everybody was asked to mark what he thought should be omitted and to add what he thought should be included. Dear Edward did not think that Bouvard had gone far enough in his praise of the Gaelic, and Pecuchet, whom we met going out to

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luncheon, declined to give any opinion on the subject of Bouvard's book.

I will not speak on the subject. (Then, I said to myself, there is a subject on which Pecuchet is not willing to advise, and with interest heightening I listened to Pecuchet.) I have told Bouvard, he said, that he cannot be at once the saviour and the critic of Irish society. If you must write a book, Bouvard, I have said, write what your own eyes have seen and you ears have heard. It would be better if he didn't write the book at all, he added, but if he must write one let him write a book out of himself. But if he persists in his philosophy he will harm the Department. Pecuchet threw up his arms, and I said to Edward: There is a certain good fellowship in Pecuchet; he would save his old pal from his vanity, the vanity of a book which he hopes will prove him to be far-seeing—*i. e.* the deep thinker, the brooding sage of Foxrock. And so long as breath remains in my body I will avouch that Pecuchet was firm in his determination not to have anything to do with Bouvard's book. He threw up his hands when I came to him with the news that Bouvard had tired of coffee and unseemly hours, and had sent his manuscript to Rolleston, who had turned up his shirt-sleeves and thrown it into a tub, and had sent it home carefully starched and ironed. The book got a good many reviews—the Fool's Hour it was, for the Catholic Celt let a great screech out of him and demanded that the redeemer should be put in the pillory.

My friend, John Redmond, will set up a Nationalist candidate against him for South Dublin; he will be beaten at the polls, wailed Pecuchet. And very soon after the defeat predicted by Pecuchet the Nationalist members began to remind the Government that Bouvard remained at the head of the Department, though it had

always been understood that the Vice-President of the Department should be a member of the House of Commons. The Nationalists yelped singly and in concert, and so loud grew the pack that Pecuchet could restrain Bouvard no longer, and he went down to Galway to try his luck. A nice kind of luck he'll meet there, Pecuchet said, and when Bouvard returned from Galway crestfallen, Pecuchet determined to speak out. He was not unmindful of past favours, but the kindest thing he could do would be to remind Bouvard that his clinging to office was undignified.

Not only undignified, he said to me one day, but a very selfish course which I never should have suspected. Our common child is the Department, he muttered savagely in his beard as we leaned over Baggot Street Bridge, and as the boat rose up in the lock he added: And he has no thought for it, only for himself. The words, an unworthy parent, rose up in my mind, but I repressed them, and applied myself to encouraging Pecuchet to unfold his soul to me.

So long as the Department, he said, is represented in Parliament it takes its place with the Admiralty, the Foreign Office, and the other Department of State, but unrepresented in Parliament it sinks at once——

I understand. It sinks to the level of the Board of Charitable Bequests, to the Intermediate Board, or to any of the other Irish boards on which it was your wont to pour your wrath when you were a Nationalist and a Plan of Campaigner.

Our joint efforts created the Department, and if he were to retire now like a man instead of clinging on and embarrassing the Government—— So he is embarrassing the Government, I interjected. But without noticing my interruption Pecuchet continued: If he were to retire, I say, now, like a man, the Liberal Government, the Con-

servative Government, any Government worthy of its name, would seize the first opportunity to pick Bouvard out as a distinguished Irishman, who, irrespective of party or of creed, should be allowed to serve his country. It seemed rather shabby of Pecuchet to round like this on his old pal, but not feeling sure that I should act any better in like circumstances, I said: The Government asked Bouvard to stay on, and it was to oblige the Government—— But the Government did not promise to keep him on indefinitely; if it did, the Department, as you have yourself admitted, would sink to the level of the Board of Charitable Bequests. He should resign, and not wait to be kicked out.

But he is engaged on a pamphlet on the economic man and the uneconomic holding, and the uneconomic man and the economic holding, and is convinced that his work should be published during his Presidency. He sits up till four in the morning. He has reverted to the Balzac method.

Why doesn't he send for Rolleston? If not for Rolleston, why not Hanson? If not Hanson, why not Father Finlay? If not Father Finlay, why not Bond?

Bond is in Munich, I answered.

Weeks and months went by, and we were never sure that the morrow would not see Bouvard flung out of Merrion Street; he did not behave with much dignity during these months, complaining on every occasion and to everybody he met that the Government was treating him very badly, and darkly hinting that Roosevelt had asked him to go to America, and apply his system to the United States; and that if the Government were to go much further he might be induced to accept Roosevelt's offer. But the Roosevelt intrigue, though it found much support in *The Homestead*, failed to impress anybody, and

suddenly it began to be rumoured that Bouvard was locking himself in, and we were disappointed when about two o'clock the newsboys were shouting: Resignation of Misther Bouvard, and we all began to wonder who would take his place in Merrion Street, a beautiful street that had been bought up by the Department, and was about to be pulled down to make way for public offices, and mayhap the destruction of Merrion Street was Bouvard's real claim to immortality.

In Flaubert's book Bouvard and Pecuchet became copying clerks again, but Nature was not satisfied with this end. She divided our Bouvard from our Pecuchet. Bouvard returned to *The Homestead* dejected, overwhelmed, downcast, believing his spirit to be irreparably broken, but he found consolation in Æ's hope-inspiring eyes, in Anderson's manliness and courage, fortitude and perseverance, and the prodigal was led to a chair.

Far happier, said Anderson, than the miserable Pecuchet, who never will get free from the toothed wheel of the great State machine that has caught him up; round and round he will go like a rabbit in the wheel of a bicycle.

Æ looked at Anderson, who had never used an image before, and he took up the strain.

You have come back, he said, to a particular and a definite purpose, to individual effort, to economics. Bouvard raised his eyes.

We have not been idle, Anderson said, progress has been made; and he picked up a map from the table and pointed to five-and-twenty more creameries.

The co-operative movement, Æ said, has continued; the farmers are with us.

That is good, said Bouvard.

Whereas with all its thousands the Department is

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effecting nothing. A cloud came into Bouvard's face, for he hoped one day to return to the Department, and seeing through that cloud Æ said: No, Bouvard, no, never hope to return again to that dreadful place where all is vain tumult and salary.

I hear, said Anderson, that Pecuchet is making arrangements to bring the School of Art under the management of the Department; he believes that by co-ordination——

I have heard nothing else but co-ordination since I left you; it has been dinned into my ears night, noon, and morning, how one must delegate all detail to subordinates, and then, how by the powers of co-ordination——

Yes, Anderson added, the man who is to take your place comes with a system of the reafforestation of Ireland, and Pecuchet agrees with him that by compromise——

The last we heard of Pecuchet, Æ said, was from George Moore, who met him at the Continental Hotel in Paris one bright May morning, and Pecuchet took him for a drive, telling him that he had an appointment with the Minister of Agriculture. The appointment, however, was missed that morning, or perhaps it was delegated to the following morning; be that as it may, George Moore describes how they went for a drive together, stopping at all the book-shops, Pecuchet springing out and coming back with parcels of books all relating to horse-breeding.

He has spoken to me about the Normandy sires, said Bouvard.

George Moore said he was after Normandy sires, and went to Chantilly to view them next day.

And it seemed from Bouvard's face that he could hear the braying of the vicious scarecrow ass that awaited him on his return to Foxrock.

I cannot think that any two men ever bore names more appropriate to their characters than Bouvard and Pecuchet, not even Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. Are not the vanity and kindliness and stupidity of Bouvard set forth in the two heavy syllables? And do not the three little snappy syllables represent with equal clearness Pecuchet's narrow intellect . . . and cunning on occasions? Again, the dissyllable Bouvard evokes indistinct outlines, pale, perplexed eyes, and a vague and somewhat neglected appearance, whereas we naturally associate Pecuchet with a neat necktie, a pointed beard, and catchwords rather than ideas. Bouvard has tried to think out one or two questions, but Pecuchet was content from his early youth with words. He began with Nationalism, and when he met Bouvard he picked up Co-operation—the word; and when he got into the Department he discovered Delegation; and Heaven only knows how the word Co-ordination got into his head; but it stuck there, and he could not get it out of his talk, bothering us all with it. But nothing lasts for ever, and when he wearied of Co-ordination he happened to meet the word Compromise; and this word must have been a great event in his life, for it revealed to him the Pecuchet of his dreams, the statesman which he always believed to be latent in him, and which more fortunate circumstances would have realised. It was a great treat to hear him on the subject of statesmanship the day that Sir Anthony MacDonnell found himself forced to resign. I led him round Merrion Square and Fitzwilliam Square, over many bridges, through Herbert Street, round again, and on again; and on leaving him I should have rushed to the scrivener's, but could not resist the temptation to run up the steps of Plunkett

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House to tell Æ all about it, regretting all the while that my weakness would cost me many admirable pages.

I shall never be able to improvise it all again. My memory is wonderful, I admit, but Pecuchet's slumberous phrases, tall, bent weeds, and matted grasses, with the snapping of an occasional aphorism, a dead branch, should be dictated at once and to nearest scrivener. I am paying dearly for the pleasure of your company.

I can see you, Æ answered, his imagination enabling him to see us in our walk, and his wit putting just the right words into his mouth—I can see you stopping at the pavement's edge asking Pecuchet to repeat one of the dead branch aphorisms; I can see you hanging on his words with a sort of literary affection; and I could listen to you for a good deal longer, but I am due to-night at the Hermetic Society, and must get home. Won't you walk a little way with me?

The proposal that we should walk a little way together reminded me that the old bicycle that had carried Bouvard's ideas all over Ireland so valiantly was now enjoying a well-earned rest in some outhouse or garden shed. Æ would not like to sell it for scrap-iron or to buy another; or it may be that he thinks bicycle riding unsuited to a fat man. He has fattened. A great roll of flesh rises to his ears, and his interests have gone so much into practical things that we think the Æ of other days is dead. We are mistaken, the Æ of our deepest affection is not dead, but sleeping; an unexpected word tells us that he has not changed at all. Relieve him, we say to ourselves, of his work at *The Homestead*, loose him among the mountains, and in a few weeks he will be hearing the fairy bells again. And happy at heart, though sorry to part with him, I returned home to a lonely meal, hoping to find courage about eight to do some reading.

A lecture was stirring in me at that time—a lecture showing that it is impossible to form any idea of the author of the plays. We can see Virgil, I said to myself, Dante, and Balzac, but Shakespeare is an abstraction, and as invisible as Jehovah. We know that somebody must have written the plays; but of one thing only are we sure—that Sidney Lee is always wrong. But I will think no more, I will read. I took down the dreaded volume, and a smile began to trickle round my lips as a picture of the dusty room at the end of many dusty corridors rose up before me, with Æ sitting at a small table teaching that there is an essential oneness in all the different revelations that Eternity has vouchsafed to mankind.

I returned to my chair, and, falling into it, listened, hearing his voice getting calmer every minute, solemn and awe-inspiring when he commended toleration to the Hermetics. You need not be, he said, too disdainful of the essential worshippers of Iacchus-Iesus, better known in Dublin under the name of Christ. . . . He, too, was a God. There were moments when it seemed to me that I could hear his voice refuting Colum, who had ventured to remind him of Diocletian. It was not for its Christianity that the ancient creed had persecuted the new, but for its intolerance and profanity.

There never was anybody like him, I said, and my thoughts melted into a long meditation, from which I awoke, saying: His conversion, or whatever it was, gave him such an iron grip on himself that, when Indian mysticism flourished in No. 3, Upper Ely Place, he submitted his genius to the directors of the movement, asking them if they would prefer his contributions to the *Theosophical Review* in verse or in prose. The directors answered: In verse, and Æ wrote *Homeward Songs*. But even these would not have strayed beyond the pages of

the review if his friend, Weekes, had not insisted that the further publication of these poems would bring comfort and peace to many, and it appears that these poems consoled the beautiful Duchess of Leinster in her passing as no other poems could have done. Æ could have been a painter if he had wished it; but a man's whole life is seldom long enough for him to acquire the craft of the painter; and, setting life above craftsmanship, he had denied himself the touch that separates the artist from the amateur, and he had done well. Accomplishment estranges from the comprehension of the many, and for the first time in the world's history we get a man stopped midway by a scruple of conscience or love of his kindred—which? If he had devoted all his days to art, his Thursday evenings at the Hermetic Society would have had to be abandoned, and the editing of *The Homestead* too. He could not be a painter and write eight or nine columns of notes and a couple of articles on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday. A man must have a terrible hold on himself to pursue the routine of *The Homestead* week after week without hope of reward, and it is this uncanny hold that he has on himself that makes him seem different from other men, for though in many ways more human than any of us, he wears the air of one that has lived before and will live again. How shall I word it? A demonic air, using the word in the Goethian sense, a Lohengrin come to fight the battle of others. One day he announced to us that he was going to publish the verses of his disciples, with a preface by himself, and we muttered among ourselves: Our beloved Æ is going to stumble. But the volume was received by the English press as a complete vindication of Celtic genius. Contrairy John answered all the effusive articles that appeared with one sentence: The English have so completely lost

all standard of poetic excellence that any one can impose upon them. A very materialistic explanation which we were loath to accept, preferring to attribute the success of the volume to the demonic power that Æ inherits from the great theosophical days when he sat up in bed with his legs tucked under his nightshirt.

He was offered some hundreds of pounds by Lord Dunsany to found a review, but he had not time to edit it, and proposed the task to John Eglinton. Contrairy John wanted to see life steadily, and to see it whole; and Yeats came along with a sneer, and said: I hear, Lord Dunsany, that you are going to supply groundsel for Æ's canaries. The sneer brought the project to naught, and Yeats went away laughing, putting the south of Ireland above the north and the east and the west, saying that Munster was always Ireland's literary portion. The first harpers of Ireland and the first story-tellers were Munstermen, and his own writers came to him from Munster. He had gotten nothing from Dublin. Murray and Ray and Robinson had all begun by writing for the *Cork Examiner* and the *Constitutional*. And Æ may search the columns of *Sinn Fein* for ever and ever without finding, I said, a blackbird or thrush, skylark or nightingale.

The portentous critic giggled a little in his stride down the incline of Rathmines Avenue, and was moved to change the conversation from *Sinn Fein*, that journal having spoken of him disrespectfully since he had accepted a pension from the English Government. Griffith, the editor of *Sinn Fein*, or Ourselves Alone, had butted him severely in several paragraphs—butted him is the word, for in appearance and mentality Griffith may be compared to a ram. He butts against England every week with admirable perseverance, and while he butts, he allows all the poets of Rathmines to carol.

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A pretty banner, I said as we crossed the bridge, for *Sinn Fein* would be a tree full of small singing birds carolling sonnets and rondeaux, ballades and villanelles, with a butting-ram underneath, and this for device; Believe that England doesn't exist, and it won't.

Yes, there is an element of Christian Science in our friend Griffith, Yeats answered, and we crossed the bridge.

You don't think that Æ will ever discover any one in *Sinn Fein* comparable to Synge?

Yeats threw up his hands.

It would be better, he said, if all his little folk went back to their desks.

When this remark was repeated to Æ, he said: Colum was earning seventy-eight pounds a year when he was at his desk at the Railway Clearing House, and now he is earning four or five pounds a week. So Willie says that I shall never find anything that will compare with Synge. Well, we shall see.

And every Thursday evening the columns of *Sinn Fein* were searched, and every lilt considered, and every accent noted; but the days and the weeks went by without a new peep-o-peep, sweet, sweet, until the day that James Stephens began to trill; and recognising at once a new songster, Æ put on his hat and went away with his cage, discovering him in a lawyer's office. A great head and two soft brown eyes looked at him over a typewriter, and an alert and intelligent voice asked him whom he wanted to see. Æ said that he was looking for James Stephens, a poet, and the typist answered: I am he.

And next Sunday evening he was admitted to the circle, and we were impressed by his wit and whimsicality of mind, but we thought Æ exaggerated the talents of the young man. True that all his discoveries had come to

something, but it was clear to us that he was anxious to put this new man alongside of Synge, and this we could not consent to do. He was a little distressed at our apathy, our unwillingness, our short-sightedness, for he was certain that James Stephens was a new note in Irish poetry. Our visions were not as clear as his. I was conscious of little more than harsh versification, and crude courage in the choice of subjects. Contrairy John was confused and roundabout, and at the end of many an argument found himself defending the very principles that he had started out to controvert. It was clear, however, that he did not think more of James Stephens than we ourselves. Yeats was the blindest of us all, and it was with ill-grace that he consented to hear Æ read the poems, giving his opinion casually; and when Æ spoke of the advantage the publication of a volume would be to Stephens, he answered: For me, the aesthetical question; for you, my dear friend, the philanthropic. Æ was hurt, but not discouraged; and to interest us he told us stories from the life of the new poet, who was a truer vagrant than ever Synge had been. Synge had fifty pounds a year; but Stephens, a poor boy without education or a penny, had wandered all over Ireland, and would have lost his life in Belfast from hunger had it not been for a charitable apple-woman. Æ was delighted at the thought of the material that his pet would have to draw upon later on when he turned from verse to prose, for Æ divined that this would be so.

James Stephens has enough poetry in him, he said to me, to be a great prose-writer.

But when he left the apple-woman? I answered, always curious.

Æ could not tell me how Stephens had picked up his education, or had learnt typewriting and shorthand and

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got employment in a lawyer's office at five-and-twenty shillings a week—well enough for a girl who has a home, but a bare sufficiency for a man whose head is full of dreams and who has a wife and child to support. His life must have been very hard to bear, without the solitude of a room in which to write his poems or intellectual comradeship, until he met Æ, a friend always ready to listen to him, to be enthusiastic about his literary projects. What a door was opened to him when he met Æ! Of what help Æ was to him in his first prose composition (no one can help another with poetry) none knows but Stephens himself; Æ forgets what he gives, but it is difficult for me to believe that Stephens did not benefit enormously, as much as I did myself. How much that was I cannot tell, for Æ was always helping me directly or indirectly. Shall I ever forget the day when, after three weeks' torture trying to write the second chapter of *Ave*, I went down to Plunkett House to see if he could help me out of my difficulty.

I am waiting for proofs, and am free for an hour. If you like we will walk round Merrion Square, and you can tell me all about it.

We turned to the east and walked along the north side, and it was opposite the National Gallery that he told me my second chapter must be in Victoria Street; and after a little argument, to which he listened very gently, he led me as a mother leads a child. I saw the error of my ways, and said: Good-bye; I see it all. Good-bye.

As well as anything I can think of, this anecdote shows how we run to our good friend in time of need, and never run in vain; but now I find myself in a difficulty out of which he will not be able to help me. He is not satisfied with his portrait, and complains that I have

represented him in *Ave* and *Salve* as the blameless hero of a young girl's novel.

Why have you found no fault with me? If you wish to create human beings you must discover their faults.

Wherefore I am put to discovering a stain upon his character. I cannot accuse him of theft, and he never speaks of his love affairs; he may be a pure man; be that as it may, it is not for me to cast the first stone at him; lying and blackmail—of what use to make charges that no one will believe? If he will not sin, why should he object to my white flower in his buttonhole? And feeling that humanity was on the whole very difficult and tiresome, I fell to thinking. . . . But of what I cannot tell; I only know I was awakened suddenly by a memory of a young painter in London, one who brought imagination and wit and epigram and laughter into our midst, and when he left us we rarely failed to ponder on the unmerited good fortune of his wife, for to live with him always seemed to us an unreasonable share of human happiness. But one day I made the acquaintance of this woman whom I had only known faintly during her married life, and heard from her that her husband did not speak to her at dinner, but propped a book up against a glass and read; and after dinner sat in his chair composing, and often went up to bed forgetting to bid her good-night. If she reproached him, he assured her there was no other woman in the world he loved as much as her; but being a man of genius his mind was away among his works. But what proof have I, she said, that he is a man of genius? Of course, if I were certain, it would be different. . . . All the same, it is a little trying, she added. And her case is the case of every woman who marries a man of genius. A trying tribe, especially at meal-times; ideas and food being apparently

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irreconcilable. I have often regretted that our good friend did not leave some of his ideas on the landing with his hat and coat, for it is distressing to hear a man say that he could not tell the difference between halibut and turbot when you have just apologised to him for an unaccountable mistake on the part of your cook. This painful incident once happened in Ely Place; and I reflected, duly, that if he were indifferent to my food he might show scant courtesy to the food that his wife provided—excellent I am sure it is—but a man of ideas cannot be catered for by friend or wife. I followed him in imagination all the way up the long Rathmines Road, and saw him picking a little from his plate, and then, becoming forgetful, his eyes would rove into dark corners. (His definition of ideas are formless spiritual essences, and the room in 17, Rathgar Avenue is full of them, economic, pictorial, and poetic.) I have it at last! A blemish, and one is enough for my portrait; a little irregularity of feature will satisfy my sitter; in the eyes of the world absent-mindedness is a blemish. But if it be none in his wife's eyes then there is no blemish, and I remembered that he chose her for her intelligence and it is no mean one. She had abandoned papistry before he met her, and had written some beautiful phrases in her pages of the *Theosophical Review*; and these won his heart. A very gracious presence and personality, too distinct to seem invidious to her husband's genius, or to deem it an injustice to herself that he should be beloved by all. But in his indifference to money we may seek and find cause for complaint. It is possible that in the eyes of women who have not succeeded in marrying men of genius he should apply his talents to increasing his income, for the common belief is that a man's life is not his exclusive possession to dispose of as pleases his good-will,

but a sort of family banking account on which his wife and children may draw checks. This is not Æ's view. He has often said to me, I came into the world without money or possessions, and have done very well without either. Why shouldn't my children do the same? His life is in his ideas as much as Christ's, and I will avouch that his wife has never tried to come between him and his ideas. As much cannot be said for Mary, whom Christ had to reprove for trying to dissuade him from his mission, which he did on many occasions. . . . But again I am hoeing and raking, shovelling up merits instead of picking out the small but necessary fault. If I dig deeper perhaps my search will be rewarded. He gives his wife all the money she asks for, but she does not know what money he has in the bank. Æ does not know himself, and feeling that Æ was about to be born into my text, a real man rather than an ideal one, my heart rose, and I said: It is not long ago since he told me that he had given a man who had asked him for a contribution a long screed for which he could have had thirty pounds from a certain magazine. In giving his screed for nothing he acted as all the great dispensers of ideas have done, and the many will find fault with him, for though they would like to have prophets and poets they would like them domesticated, each one bringing home to a little house in the suburbs a reel of office chit-chat to unwind for his wife's pleasure, the poet on one side of the hearth, the wife on the other, the cat between them. Jane and Minna would listen attentively, but Violet's thoughts would stray and she would find herself very soon with Cuchulain, Caoilte, and Finn, and picking up from the table her beautiful book of fairy tales, I read them until I was awakened by a knocking at my front-door. The servants had gone to bed. Who could this be? Æ perhaps. It was John Eglinton.

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Are you sure you aren't busy? If you are, don't hesitate——

I was sitting by the fire thinking.

I am loath to disturb a thinking man; and he stopped half-way between the armchair and the door.

I assure you I had come to the end of my thinking.

On what subject?

One that you know very well—Æ. Among my portraits he is the least living, and that is a pity. He does not silhouette as Yeats does or as dear Edward. Edward's round head and bluff shoulders and big thighs and long feet correspond with his blunt mind. And Yeats's solemn height and hieratic appearance authorise the literary dogmas that he pronounces every season. He is the type of the literary fop, and the most complete that has ever appeared in literature. But Æ! I wonder if we could get him into a phrase, John. After a while I said: He has the kindly mind of a shepherd, and ten years ago he was thin, lithe, active, shaggy, and I can see him leaning on his crook meditating.

That is just what I don't think he does. He talks about meditation, but his mind is much too alert. There is this resemblance, however: the shepherd knows little but the needs of his flock, and the other day, at Horace Plunkett's, I heard that Æ exhibited a surprising ignorance in an argument with some English economist. He did not know that Athenian society was founded on slavery.

I am glad to hear it, for if he knew all the things that one learns out of books I should never get him into a literary silhouette.

You admit, John said, inspiration in his painting, but you think it lacks quality; and in your study of him you will explain——

Of course, a most important point, Æ has come out

of many previous existences and is going toward many others, and looks upon this life as an episode of no importance.

An interesting explanation, but the real one is——

Is what? I asked eagerly.

He is too impatient. I told him so once, but he answered indignantly that there was no more patient man than he.

I prefer my explanation, I answered.

It is the more poetic, but temperament goes deeper than belief, John replied.

Not deeper than Æ's belief in his own eternity, I said; and my answer had the effect of rolling John for a moment out of his ideas. He'll soon be back in them again, I said to myself. At the end of another long silence John told me that somebody had said that Æ was an unhappy man.

It never struck me that he was unhappy. He always seems among the happiest. And I began to wonder if John Eglinton looked upon me as a happy man.

You're happy in your work, but I don't know if you are happy in your life.

And you, John, I said, are happy in your thoughts.

Yes, he answered, and my unhappiness is caused by the fact that I get so little time for enjoying them.

It was pleasant for two old cronies to sit by the fire, wondering what they had gotten out of life; and when John bade me good-bye at the door he admonished me to be very careful what I said about Æ's home life.

But he has asked me to tack him on to life, and now you think, since he has been tacked on, he won't like it.

Damn these models! I said, returning to my room. Models are calamitous, and it would perhaps be calamitous to be without them. Shakespeare, too, is a calamity.

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And, dismayed by the number of plays I should have to read, my thoughts turned to dear little John Eglinton, to the little shrivelled face and the round head with a great deal of back to it, to the reddish hair into which grey is coming, to the gaunt figure, and I fell to thinking how his trousers had wound round his legs as he had walked down the street. It seemed to me that I should never find anything more suitable to my talent as a narrator and as a psychologist than this dear little man that had just left me, dry, determined, and all of a piece, valiant in his ideas and in his life, come straight down from the hard North into the soft Catholic Dublin atmosphere, which was not, however, able to rob him of any of his individuality. The Catholic atmosphere has intensified John Eglinton—boiled him down, as it were—made him a sort of Liebig extract of himself, and I seemed to realise more than ever I had done before how like he was to himself: the well-backed head and the square shoulders, and the hesitating, puzzled look that comes into his face. I had often sought a reason for that look. Now I know the cause of it: because he gets so little time for his ideas. He does not wish to write them out any more than Steer wishes to exhibit his Chelsea figures; he rearranges them and dusts them, and sits among them conscious of familiar presences, and as the years go by he seems to us to sink deeper into his armchair, and his contempt of our literary activities strengthens; he is careful to hide the fact from us lest he should wound our feelings, but it transpired the evening I ran over to the Library to tell him of Goethe's craving for information on all subjects, including even a little midwifery. So that he might continue a little dribble of ink in the morning, he said, for John never lacks a picturesque phrase, but that is neither here nor there; the sentiment it expresses is John Eglinton—a

lack of faith in all things. Of late years he seems to have been drawn toward Buddhism, and goes out to a lonely cottage among the Dublin mountains in the hope that the esoteric lore of the East may allow him to look a little over the border. I shall never find a better model than John Eglinton. It seems to me that I understand him; and what a fine foil he would make to the soft and peaty Hyde, the softest of all our natural products, a Protestant that Protestantism has not been able to harden! A moment after I sat pondering on his yellow skull floating back from the temples, collecting hugely on the crown; his black eyebrows and a drooping black moustache; his laugh, shallow and a little vacant, a little mechanical; and his words and thoughts, casual as the stage Irishman's. We would pick him out for a Catholic in a tram, and if there were a priest in the tram Hyde would be interested in him at once, and he would like nothing better than to visit Clare Island with a batch of ecclesiastics, a dozen or fifteen parish priests, not one of them weighing less than fifteen stone, and the bishop eighteen. It would be a pleasure to Hyde to drop the words *Your Grace* into as many sentences as possible; whether he would kiss the bishop's ring may be doubted—being a Protestant, he could hardly do so—but he would fly for a pillow to put under His Graces's throbbing head. On Clare Island the parish priest would have prepared legs of mutton and sirloins of beef, chickens and geese, and Hyde's comment to His Grace would be: The hospitality of the Irish priest is unequalled. He will crack a bottle of champagne with any visitor. A gathering of this kind is very agreeable to the Catholic Protestant, and the Catholic bishop likes to do business with the Catholic Protestant better than with anybody else. The Catholic might stand up to him; there are one or two,

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perhaps, who would venture to disagree with His Grace, but the Catholic Protestant melts like peat into fine ash before His Grace's ring. But Hyde was not always Catholic Protestant. In the old Roscommon glebe there was sufficient Protestantism in him to set him learning Irish. He has written some very beautiful poems in Irish, and it is to Hyde that we owe the jargon since become so famous, for the great discovery was his that to write beautiful English one has only to translate literally from the Irish; his prose translations of the *Love Songs of Connaught* are as beautiful as Synge's, and it is a pity he was stopped by Father Tom Finlay, who said: Write in Irish or in English, but our review does not like mixed languages. And these words and his election to the Presidency of the Gaelic League made an end to Hyde as a man of letters. I took his measure at the banquet at the Shelbourne Hotel, his noisy demonstration in Irish and English convincing me that the potential scholar would be swallowed up in the demagogue, for the Gaelic League must make no enemies; and that the way to success is to stand well with everybody—members of Parliament, priests, farmers, shopkeepers—and by standing well with all these people, especially with the priests, Hyde has become the arch-type of the Catholic Protestant, cunning, subtle, cajoling, superficial, and affable, and these qualities have enabled him to paddle the old dugout of the Gaelic League up from the marshes through many an old bog, lake, and river, reaching at last Portobello Bridge, where he took on board two passengers, Agnes O'Farrelly and Mary Hayden, and, having placed them in the stern, he paddled the old dug-out to the steps of the National University. He gallantly handed them up the steps, and so amazed were the three at the salaries that were offered to them that they forgot the old dug-out; and worn and broken and

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water-logged, it has drifted back to the original Connemara bog-hole, to sink under the brown water out of sight of the quiet evening sky, unwatched, unmourned save by dear Edward, who will weep a few tears, I am sure, when the last bubbles arise and break.

XI

The sinking of the old dug-out will rob Edward of an evening's occupation, and the question comes, to what great national or civic end he will devote his Thursdays. On Monday evening he presides at the Pipers' Club, on Tuesday he goes to the theatre, on Wednesday he attends a meeting of Sinn Fein, on Thursday he dozes through the proceedings of the Coisde Gnotha, on Friday there is choir practice in the cathedral, on Saturday he speaks severely to his disobedient choristers, tries new voices in his rooms in Lincoln Place, and plans new programmes with Vincent O'Brien, his choirmaster, chosen by him because he believes in O'Brien's talent and in his desire to give the music in accordance with tradition and Edward's own taste. On Sunday he is ever watchful in the cathedral, sitting with his hand to his ear, noting the time and the efficiency of the singers.

I had to give way on one point, he said to me, but I think I told you already that the Archbishop stipulated that if a great composer of Church music should arise, the cathedral should not be debarred from giving his music. I don't think it will happen very often, so there was no use in opposing His Grace on this particular point. We have now eight hundred a year——

Eight hundred a year out of ten thousand!

You see, he said, the Archbishop has added ten thousand

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to mine, and that invested at four per cent. will bring in eight hundred.

So you succeeded in persuading the Archbishop to give you ten thousand as well as to grant you the Headship! My admiration for Edward as a business man swelled.

It was a hard fight, he said, and very often the negotiations were nearly broken off; but I stuck to my guns, for of course it wasn't likely that I was going to give ten thousand without getting what I was bargaining for.

The sum of money seemed to strike a chord in my memory, and I was moved to ask him what had led him to fix on this sum, but refrained lest I should appear too inquisitive. Something must have happened, I said, to fix this sum in his mind. It has never been less, it has never been more, and in the beginning he didn't know how much money was necessary to found the choir. Would he have given the twenty thousand if——

It suddenly dropped upon me that he had told me in Bayreuth, in the great yawning street between the little bridge and the railway-station, that he had come out of a great conscientious crisis, and had had to go to Bishop Healy and lay the whole matter before him. What sin can he have committed? I said to myself, and, quelling my curiosity as best I could, I tried to induce him to confide in me, and after some persuasion he confessed that his mother, fearing the Land Acts, had prevailed upon him to redistribute his grass-farms. He had told the tenants that he would reinstate them; whereas he had given them other farms equally good, but they had found fault with the lands he had put them into, and his bailiff had been fired at on the highroad to Gort. He had received coffins and cross-bones; it was not, however, fear of his life or his money that had brought about the great mental breakdown, but his conscience. If he had acted

wrongly, he must make reparation before his sin would be forgiven him. . . . And while I pictured him as a prey to remorse, of pallid and rueful countenance, he told me that the one thing that stood to him was his appetite. For after a night of agony he often descended his Gothic stairs forgetful of everything but the sirloin on the side-table. He is always original, I said, and has discovered an unexpected connection between conscience and appetite. But notwithstanding his appetite, he had had to leave Tillyra for Cork. He had always liked the sea and its influences, and in six weeks had returned much improved in health, but still unable to smoke his churchwarden, only an occasional cigar, and that a mild one.

It may have been from too much smoking, I said; but I can't think why you wanted to send for Bishop Healy. I could have advised you better.

Nothing would have satisfied me but a bishop, he answered, with a terrified look in his eyes.

To tell you that you must keep your promise?

All these business matters are very intricate, and it is difficult to say who is right and who is wrong. One doesn't know oneself, and when one's interests are concerned one doesn't see straight.

My heart went out to him, for it is seldom that one meets anybody altogether honourable about money matters, and rarer still is he who accepts the advice that he asks for: Edward had reinstated his tenants, and I began to wonder if the ten thousand that he had spent upon his choir was connected in some remote way with his management of the property, or with his mother's management, or with his father's. A conscience like Edward's might lead him back one hundred years, to his grandfather.

But if he had had any suspicion about this money, I should have heard of it. He has been confessing himself

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to me for the last thirty years. . . . Now I come to think of it, he never told me how he first came to hear of Palestrina. It was when we lived in the Temple together that he began to speak to me about the Mass of Pope Marcellus; and one Christmas Eve he persuaded me to go over to Paris with him to hear it. And shall I ever forget how he sidled up to me when we came out of the church?

Now what do you think of Palestrina?

About the beauty of the music there can be no question, and as far advanced in his art as—shall we say—Botticelli?

And what about the plain-chant? You will never say again that you don't like plain-chant.

But there was no plain-chant. None was sung to-day.

Yes, the hymn. And the boy's voice—how much purer than a woman's!

He sang very beautifully, Edward. . . . You don't mean the *Adeste Fideles*?

Of course I do.

But Edward—— And we began to argue, myself convinced, in spite of the fact that he showed me the *Adeste Fideles* in his Prayer-Book among plain-chant tunes, that it could not be else than modern music. A Raphael doesn't become a Rubens because it happens to have been hung among Rubenses.

We argued about plain-chant endings till I was on the point of reminding him of the thirteenth-century window in Aix-la-Chapelle, but restrained myself for once, and admitting he had eaten too much steak, drunken too much wine, he asked me to come with him. He was taking me to the other end of Paris to buy the masses and motets of the great Italian contrapuntalists; we walked and we walked, arriving at last at the shop. His negotiations with the music-seller began to astonish me.

I had fancied he was going to buy music to the value of a pound or thirty shillings—two pounds, perhaps—but I heard: And if I add three motets by Clemens non Papa and two masses by Orlando di Lasso, that will come to how much? Five hundred francs. And if I take six more motets and six more masses by Vittoria? That will bring up the total to twelve hundred francs. I may be wrong in my figures, but he certainly bought that morning from thirty to forty pounds' worth of music; and while the bundle was being tied, Borde, the conductor, came in, and I told him that my friend Edward Martyn was about to give ten thousand pounds to found a choir in Dublin, and was buying music. Borde was, of course, very much interested in the Dublin choir, and he led me into conversation graciously, in the course of which I said:

I congratulate you, M. Borde, on your wonderful boy treble.

A cloud came into his face, and after some pressing he admitted that there was no boy in his choir.

No boy! and Mr. Martyn thinks a boy's voice much more beautiful than a woman's. It wasn't a boy, then, who sang the *Adeste Fideles*?

No . . . a woman. He added that she was fifty. I thanked him inwardly, and, feeling sorry for Edward, persuaded Borde to admit that he had taught her to sing like a boy. But if Edward had mistaken a woman's voice for a boy's he may be mistaken about the plain-chant.

Mr. Martyn tells me that the *Adeste* is a plain-chant tune: Surely not.

No, he answered; it is a Portuguese tune, and it was written about one hundred years ago.

But, Edward spluttered, it is in my Prayer-Book among the plain-chant. How did it get there?

Borde could not enlighten him on that point, and I

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suggested that he should make application to the publisher of his Prayer-Book and get his money back. There is nobody, I said, like him. He is more wonderful than anything in literature. I prefer him to Sancho who was untroubled with a conscience and never thought of running to the Bishop of Toledo. All the same he is not without the shrewdness of his ancestors, and got the better of Archbishop Walsh, and for the last five years Vincent O'Brien has been beating time, and will beat it till the end of his life; and he will be succeeded by others, for Edward has, by deed, saved the Italian contrapuntalists till time everlasting from competition with modern composers. He certainly has gotten the better of Walsh. And I thought of a picture-gallery in Dublin with nothing in it but Botticelli and his school, and myself declaring that all painting that had been done since had no interest for me. . . . A smile began to spread over my face, for the story that was coming into my mind seemed oh! so humorous, so like Ireland, so like Edward, that I began to tell myself again the delightful story of the unrefined ears that, weary of erudite music, had left the cathedral and sought instinctively modern tunes and women's voices, and as these were to be found in Westland Row the church was soon overflowing with a happy congregation. But in a little while the collections grew scantier. This time it couldn't be Palestrina, and all kinds of reasons were adduced. At last the truth could no longer be denied—the professional Catholics of Merrion Square had been driven out of Westland Row by the searching smells of dirty clothes, and had gone away to the University Church in Stephen's Green. So if it weren't Palestrina directly it was Palestrina indirectly, and the brows of the priests began to knit when Edward Martyn's name was mentioned. Them fal-de-dals is well enough on

the Continent, in Paris, where there is no faith, was the opinion of an important ecclesiastic. But we don't want them here, murmured a second ecclesiastic. All this counterpoint may make a very pretty background for Mr. Martyn's prayers, but what about the poor people's? Good composer or bad composer, there is no congregation in him, said a third. There's too much congregation, put in the first, but not the kind we want! The second ecclesiastic took snuff, and the group were of opinion that steps should be taken to persuade dear Edward to make good their losses. The priests in Marlborough Street sympathised with the priests of Westland Row, and told them that they were so heavily out of pocket that Mr. Martyn had agreed to do something for them. It seemed to the Westland Row priests that if Mr. Martyn were making good the losses of the priests of the pro-Cathedral, he should make good their losses. It was natural that they should think so, and to acquit himself of all responsibility Edward no doubt consulted the best theologians on the subject, and I think that they assured him that he is not responsible for indirect losses. If he were, his whole fortune would not suffice. He was, of course, very sorry if a sudden influx of poor people had caused a falling off in the collections of Westland Row, for he knew that the priests needed the money very much to pay for the new decorations, and to help them he wrote an article in the *Independent* praising the new blue ceiling, which seemed, so he wrote, a worthy canopy for the soaring strains of Palestrina.

Unfortunately, rubbing salt into the wound, I said. A story that will amuse Dujardin, and it will be great fun telling him in the shady garden at Fontainebleau how Edward, anxious to do something for his church, had succeeded in emptying two. All the way down the alleys he will wonder how Edward could have ever looked upon

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Palestrina's masses as religious music. The only music, he will say, in which religious emotion transpires is plain-chant. Huysmans says that the *Tantum Ergo* or the *Dies Iræ*, one or the other, reminds him of a soul being dragged out of purgatory, and it is possible that it does; but a plain-chant tune arranged in eight-part counterpoint cannot remind one of anything very terrible. Dujardin knows that Palestrina was a priest, and he will say: That fact deceived your friend, just as the fact of finding the *Adeste Fideles* among the plain-chant tunes deceived him. For of course I shall tell Dujardin that story too. It is too good to be missed. He is wonderful, Dujardin! I shall cry out in one of the sinuous alleys. There never was anybody like him! And I will tell him more soul-revealing anecdotes. I will say: Dujardin, listen. One evening he contended that the great duet at the end of *Siegfried* reminded him of a mass by Palestrina. Dujardin will laugh, and, excited by his laughter, I will try to explain to him that what Edward sees is that Palestrina took a plain-chant tune and gave fragments of it to the different voices, and in his mind these become confused with the motives of *The Ring*. You see, Dujardin, the essential always escapes him—the intention of the writer is hidden from him. I am beginning to understand your friend. He has, let us suppose, a musical ear that allows him to take pleasure in the music; but a musical ear will not help him to follow Wagner's idea—how, in a transport of sexual emotion, a young man and a young woman on a mountain-side awaken to the beauty of the life of the world. Dujardin's appreciations will provoke me, and I will say: Dujardin, you shouldn't be so appreciative. If I were telling you of a play I had written, it would be delightful to watch my idea dawning upon your consciousness; but I am telling you of a real man, and one that I shall never be able to get

into literature. He will answer: We invent nothing; we can but perceive. And then, exhilarated, carried beyond myself, I will say: Dujardin, I will tell you something still more wonderful than the last *gaffe*. *Il gaffe dans les Quat'z Arts*. He admires Ibsen, but you'd never guess the reason why—because he is very like Racine; both of them, he says, are classical writers. And do you know how he arrived at that point? Because nobody is killed on the stage in Racine or in Ibsen. He does not see that the intention of Racine is to represent men and women out of time and out of space, unconditioned by environment, and that the very first principle of Ibsen's art is the relation of his characters to their environment. In many passages he merely dramatises Darwin. There never was anybody so interesting as dear Edward, and there never will be anybody like him in literature. . . . I will explain why presently, but I must first tell you another anecdote. I went to see him one night, and he told me that the theme of the play he was writing was a man who had married a woman because he had lost faith in himself; the man did not know, however, that the woman had married him for the same reason, and the two of them were thinking—I have forgotten what they were thinking, but I remember Edward saying: I should like to suggest hopelessness. I urged many phrases, but he said: It isn't a phrase I want, but an actual thing. I was thinking of a broken anchor—that surely is a symbol of hopelessness. Yes, I said, no doubt, but how are you going to get a broken anchor into a drawing-room? I don't write about drawing-rooms. Well, living-rooms. It isn't likely that they would buy a broken anchor and put it up by the coal-scuttle.

There's that against it, he answered. If you could suggest anything better—— What do you think of a library in which there is nothing but unacted plays?

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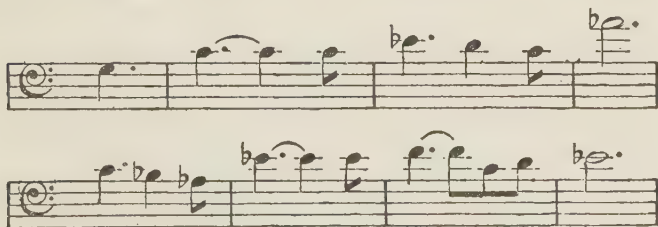
The characters could say, when there was nothing for them to do on the stage, that they were going to the library to read, and the library would have the advantage of reminding everybody of the garret in the *Wild Duck*. A very cruel answer, my friend, Dujardin will say, and I will tell him that I can't help seeing in Edward something beyond Shakespeare or Balzac. Now, tell me, which of these anecdotes I have told you is the most humorous? He will not answer my question, but a certain thoughtfulness will begin to settle in his face, and he will say: Everything with him is accidental, and when his memory fails him he falls into another mistake, and he amuses you because it is impossible for you to anticipate his next mistake. You know there is going to be one; there must be one, for he sees things separately rather than relatively. I am beginning to understand your friend.

You are, you are; you are doing splendidly. But you haven't told me, Dujardin, which anecdote you prefer. Stay, there is another one. Perhaps this one will help you to a still better understanding. When he brought *The Heather Field* and Yeats's play *The Countess Cathleen* to Dublin for performance, a great trouble of conscience awakened suddenly in him, and a few days before the performance he went to a theologian to ask him if *The Countess Cathleen* were a heretical work, and, if it were would Almighty God hold him responsible for the performance? But he couldn't withdraw Yeats's play without withdrawing his own, and it appears that he breathed a sigh of relief when a common friend referred the whole matter to two other theologians, and as these gave their consent Edward allowed the plays to go on; but Cardinal Logue intervened, and wrote a letter to the papers to say that the play seemed to him unfit for Catholic ears, and Edward would have withdrawn the plays if the Cardinal

hadn't admitted in his letter that he had judged the play by certain extracts only.

He wishes to act rightly, but has little faith in himself; and what makes him so amusing is that he needs advice in aesthetics as well as in morals. We are, I said, Dujardin, at the roots of conscience. And I began to ponder the question what would happen to Edward if we lived in a world in which aesthetes ruled: I should be where Bishop Healy is, and he would be a thin, small voice crying in the wilderness—an amusing subject of meditation, from which I awoke suddenly.

I wonder how Dujardin is getting on with his Biblical studies? Last year he was calling into question the authorship of the Romans—a most eccentric view; and, remembering how weakly I had answered him, I took the Bible from the table and began to read the Epistle with a view to furnishing myself with arguments wherewith to confute him. My Bible opened at the ninth chapter, and I said: Why, here is the authority for the Countess Cathleen's sacrifice which Edward's theologian deemed untheological. It will be great fun to poke Edward up with St. Paul, and on my way to Lincoln Place I thought how I might lead the conversation to *The Countess Cathleen*.



A few minutes afterwards a light appeared on the staircase and the door slowly opened.

Come in, Siegfried, though you were off the key.

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Well, my dear friend, it is a difficult matter to whistle above two trams passing simultaneously and six people jabbering round a public-house, to say nothing of a jarvey or two, and you perhaps dozing in your armchair, as your habit often is. You won't open to anything else except a motive of *The Ring*; and I stumbled up the stairs in front of Edward, who followed with a candle.

Wait a moment; let me go first and I'll turn up the gas.

You aren't sitting in the dark, are you?

No, but I read better by candle-light, and he blew out the candles in the tin candelabrum that he had made for himself. He is original even in his candelabrum; no one before him had ever thought of a candelabrum in tin, and I fell to admiring his appearance more carefully than perhaps I had ever done before, so monumental did he seem lying on the little sofa sheltered from drafts by a screen, a shawl about his shoulders. His churchwarden was drawing famously, and I noticed his great square hands with strong fingers, and square nails pared closely away, and as heretofore I admired the curve of the great belly, the thickness of the thighs, the length and breadth and the width of his foot hanging over the edge of the sofa, the apoplectic neck falling into great rolls of flesh, the humid eyes, the skull covered with short stubbly hair. I looked round the rooms and they seemed part of himself: the old green wallpaper on which he pins reproductions of the Italian masters. And I longed to peep once more into the bare bedroom into which he goes to fetch bottles of Apollinaris. Always original! Is there another man in this world whose income is two thousand a year, and who sleeps in a bare bedroom, without dressing-room, or bathroom, or servant in the house to brush his clothes, and who has to go to the baker's for his breakfast?

We had been talking for some time of the Gaelic League,

and from Hyde it was easy to pass to Yeats and his plays.

His best play is *The Countess Cathleen*.

The Countess Cathleen is only a sketch.

But what I never could understand, Edward, was why you and the Cardinal could have had any doubts as to the orthodoxy of *The Countess Cathleen*.

What, a woman that sells her own soul in order to save the souls of others!

I suppose your theologian objected——

Of course he objected.

He cannot have read St. Paul.

What do you mean?

He can't have read St. Paul, or else he is prepared to throw over St. Paul.

Mon ami Moore, mon ami Moore.

The supernatural idealism of a man who would sell his soul to save the souls of others fills me with awe.

But it wasn't a man; it was the Countess Cathleen, and women are never idealists.

Not the saints?

His face grew solemn at once.

If you give me the Epistles I will read the passage to you. And it was great fun to go to the bookshelves and read: I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

Edward's face grew more and more solemn, and I wondered of what he was thinking.

Paul is a very difficult and a very obscure writer, and I think the Church is quite right not to encourage the reading of the Epistles, especially without comments.

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Then you do think there is something in the passage I have read?

After looking down his dignified nose for a long time, he said:

Of course, the Church has an explanation. All the same, it's very odd that St. Paul should have said such a thing—very odd.

There is no doubt that I owe a great deal of my happiness to Edward; all my life long he has been exquisite entertainment. And I fell to thinking that Nature was very cruel to have led me, like Moses, within sight of the Promised Land. A story would be necessary to bring Edward into literature, and it would be impossible to devise an action of which he should be a part. The sex of a woman is odious to him, and a man with two thousand a year does not rob nor steal, and he is so uninterested in his fellow-men that he has never an ill word to say about anybody. John Eglinton is a little thing; Æ is a soul that few will understand; but Edward is universal—more universal than Yeats, than myself, than any of us, but for lack of a story I shall not be able to give him the immortality in literature which he seeks in sacraments. Shakespeare always took his stories from some other people. Turgenev's portrait of him would be thin, poor, and evasive, and Balzac would give us the portrait of a mere fool. And Edward is not a fool. As I understand him he is a temperament without a rudder; all he has to rely upon is his memory, which isn't a very good one, and so he tumbles from one mistake into another. My God! it is a terrible thing to happen to one, to understand a man better than he understands himself, and to be powerless to help him. If I had been able to undo his faith I should have raised him to the level of Sir Horace Plunkett, but he resisted me; and perhaps he did well, for he came into

the world seeing things separately rather than relatively, and had to be a Catholic. He is a born Catholic, and I remembered one of his confessions—a partial confession, but a confession: If you had been brought up as strictly as I have been—I don't think he ever finished the sentence; he often leaves sentences unfinished, as if he fears to think things out. The end of the sentence should run: You would not dare to think independently. He thinks that his severe bringing-up has robbed him of something. But the prisoner ends by liking his prison-house, and on another occasion he said: If it hadn't been for the Church, I don't know what would have happened to me.

My thoughts stopped, and when I awoke I was thinking of Hughes. Perhaps the link between Hughes and Edward was Loughrea Cathedral. He had shown me a photograph of some saints modelled by Hughes. Hughes is away in Paris, I said, modelling saints for Loughrea Cathedral. The last time I saw him was at Walter Osborne's funeral, and Walter's death set me thinking of the woman I had lost, and little by little all she had told me about herself floated up in my mind like something that I had read. I had never seen her father nor the Putney villa in which she had been brought up, but she had made me familiar with both through her pleasant mode of conversation, which was never to describe anything, but just to talk about things, dropping phrases here and there, and the phrases she dropped were so well chosen that the comfort of the villa, its pompous meals and numerous servants, its gardens and greenhouses, with stables and coach-house just behind, are as well known to me as the house that I am living in, better known in a way, for I see it through the eyes of the imagination . . . clearer eyes than the physical eyes.

It does not seem to me that any one was ever more

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conscious of whence she had come and of what she had been; she seemed to be able to see herself as a child again, and to describe her childhood with her brother (they were nearly the same age) in the villa and in the villa's garden. I seemed to see them always as two rather staid children who were being constantly dressed by diligent nurses and taken out for long drives in the family carriage. They did not like these drives and used to hide in the garden; but their governess was sent to fetch them, and they were brought back. Her father did not like to have the horses kept waiting, and one day as Stella stood with him in the passage, she saw her mother come out of her bedroom beautifully dressed. Her father whispered something in his wife's ear, and he followed her into her bedroom. Stella remembered how the door closed behind them. In my telling, the incident seems to lose some of its point, but in Stella's relation it seemed to put her father and his wife before me and so clearly that I could not help asking her what answer her father would make were she to tell him that she had a lover. A smile hovered in her grave face. He would look embarrassed, she said, and wonder why I should have told him such a thing, and then I think he would go to the greenhouse, and when he returned he would talk to me about something quite different. I don't think that Stella ever told me about the people that came to their house, but people must have come to it, and as an example of how a few words can convey an environment I will quote her: I always wanted to talk about Rossetti, she said, and these seven words seem to me to tell better than any description the life of a girl living with a formal father in a Putney villa, longing for something, not knowing exactly what, and anxious to get away from home. . . . I think she told me she was eighteen or nineteen and had started painting before she met Florence

at the house of one of her father's friends; a somewhat sore point this meeting was, for Florence was looked upon by Stella's father as something of a Bohemian. She was a painter, and knew all the Art classes and the fees that had to be paid, and led Stella into the world of studios and models and girl friends. She knew how to find studios and could plan out a journey abroad. Stella's imagination was captured, and even if her father had tried to offer opposition to her leaving home he could not have prevented her, for she was an heiress (her mother was dead and had left her a considerable income); but he did not try, and the two girls set up house together in Chelsea; they travelled in Italy and Spain; they had a cottage in the country; they painted pictures and exhibited their pictures in the same exhibitions; they gave dances in their studios and were attracted by this young man and the other; but Stella did not give herself to any one, because, as she admitted to me, she was afraid that a lover would interrupt the devotion which she intended to give to Art. But life is forever casting itself into new shapes and forms, and no sooner had she begun to express herself in Art than she met me. I was about to go to Ireland to preach a new gospel, and must have seemed a very impulsive and fantastic person to her, but were not impulsiveness and fantasy just the qualities that would appeal to her? And were not gravity and good sense the qualities that would appeal to me, determined as I was then to indulge myself in a little madness?

I could not have chosen a saner companion than Stella; my instinct had led me to her; but because one man's instinct is a little more clear than another's, it does not follow that he has called reason to his aid. It must be remembered always that the art of painting is as inveterate in me as the art of writing, and that I am never altogether

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myself when far away from the smell of oil paint. Stella could talk to one about painting, and all through that wonderful summer described in *Salve* our talk flowed on as delightfully as a breeze in Maytime, and as irresponsible, flashing thoughts going by and avowals perfumed with memories. Only in her garden did conversation fail us, for in her garden Stella could think only of her flowers, and it seemed an indiscretion to follow her as she went through the twilight gathering dead blooms or freeing plants from noxious insects. But she would have had me follow her, and I think was always a little grieved that I wasn't as interested in her garden as I was in her painting; and my absent-mindedness when I followed her often vexed her and my mistakes distressed her.

You are interested, she said, only in what I say about flowers and not in the flowers themselves. You like to hear me tell about Miss —— whose business in life is to grow carnations, because you already see her, dimly, perhaps, but still you see her in a story. Forget her and look at this Miss Shifner!

Yes, it is beautiful, but we can only admire the flowers that we notice when we are children, I answered. Dahlias, china roses, red and yellow tulips, tawny wallflowers, purple pansies, are never long out of my thoughts, and all the wonderful varieties of the iris, the beautiful blue satin and the cream, some shining like porcelain, even the common iris that grows about the moat.

But there were carnations in your mother's garden?

Yes, and I remember seeing them being tied with bass. But what did you say yesterday about carnations? That they were the——

She laughed and would not tell me, and when the twilight stooped over the high trees and the bats flitted and the garden was silent except when a fish leaped, I begged

her to come away to the wild growths that I loved better than the flowers.

But the mallow and willow-weed are the only two that you recognise. How many times have I told you the difference between self-heal and tufted vetch?

I like cow-parsley and wild hyacinths and——

You have forgotten the name. As well speak of a woman that you loved but whose name you had forgotten.

Well, if I have, I love trees better than you do, Stella. You pass under a fir unstirred by the mystery of its branches, and I wonder at you, for I am a tree worshipper, even as my ancestors, and am moved as they were by the dizzy height of a great silver fir. You like to paint trees, and I should like to paint flowers if I could paint; there we are set forth, you and I.

I have told in *Salve* that in Rathfarnham she found many motives for painting; the shape of the land and the spire above the straggling village appealed to me, but she was not altogether herself in these pictures. She would have liked the village away, for man and his dwellings did not form part of her conception of a landscape; large trees and a flight of clouds above the trees were her selection, and the almost unconscious life of kine wandering or sheep seeking the shelter of a tree.

Stella was a good walker, and we followed the long road leading from Rathfarnham up the hills, stopping to admire the long plain which we could see through the comely trees shooting out of the shelving hillside.

If I have beguiled you into a country where there are no artists and few men of letters, you can't say that I have not shown you comely trees. And now if you can walk two miles farther up this steep road I will show you a lovely prospect.

And I enjoyed her grave admiration of the old Queen

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Anne dwelling-house, its rough masonry, the yew hedges, the path along the hillside leading to the Druid altar and the coast-line sweeping in beautiful curves, but she did not like to hear me say that the drawing of the shore reminded her of Corot.

It is a sad affectation, she said, to speak of Nature reminding one of pictures.

Well, the outlines of Howth are beautiful, I answered, and the haze is incomparable. I should like to have spoken about a piece of sculpture, but for your sake, Stella, I refrain.

She was interested in things rather than ideas, and I remember her saying to me that things interest us only because we know that they are always slipping from us. A strange thing for a woman to say to her lover. She noticed all the changes of the seasons and loved them, and taught me to love them. She brought a lamb back from Rathfarnham, a poor forlorn thing that had run bleating so pitifully across the windy field that she had asked the shepherd where the ewe was, and he had answered that she had been killed overnight by a golf-ball. The lamb will be dead before morning, he added. And it was that March that the donkey produced a foal, a poor ragged thing that did not look as if it ever could be larger than a goat, but the donkey loved her foal.

Do you know the names of those two birds flying up and down the river?

They look to me like two large wrens with white waistcoats.

They are water-ouzzels, she said.

The birds flew with rapid strokes of the wings, like kingfishers, alighting constantly on the river, on large mossy stones, and though we saw them plunge into the

water, it was not to swim, but to run along the bottom in search of worms.

But do worms live under water?

The rooks were building, and a little while after a great scuffling was heard in one of the chimneys and a young jackdaw came down and soon became tamer than any bird I had ever seen, tamer than a parrot, and at the end of May the corncrake called from the meadow that summer had come again, and the kine wandered in deeper and deeper and deeper herbage. The days seemed never to end, and looking through the branches of the chestnut in which the fruit had not begun to show, we caught sight of a strange spectacle. Stella said, A lunar rainbow, and I wondered, never having heard of or seen such a thing before.

I shall never forget that rainbow, Stella, and am glad that we saw it together.

In every love story lovers reprove each other for lack of affection, and Stella had often sent me angry letters which caused me many heart-burnings and brought me out to her; in the garden there were reconciliations, we picked up the thread again, and the summer had passed before the reason of these quarrels became clear to me. One September evening Stella said she would accompany me to the gate, and we had not gone very far before I began to notice that she was quarrelling with me. She spoke of the loneliness of the Moat House, and I had answered that she had not been alone two evenings that week. She admitted my devotion. And if you admit that there has been no neglect——

She would not tell me, but there was something she was not satisfied with, and before we reached the end of the avenue she said, I don't think I can tell you. But on being pressed she said:

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Well, you don't make love to me often enough.

And full of apologies I answered, Let me go back.

No, I can't have you back now, not after having spoken like that.

But she yielded to my invitation, and we returned to the house, and next morning I went back to Dublin a little dazed, a little shaken.

A few days after she went away to Italy to spend the winter and wrote me long letters, interesting me in herself, in the villagers, in the walks and the things that she saw in her walks, setting me sighing that she was away from me, or that I was not with her. And going to the window I would stand for a long time watching the hawthorns in their bleak wintry discontent, thinking how the sunlight fell into the Italian gardens, and caught the corner of the ruin she was sketching; and I let my fancy stray for a time unchecked. It would be wonderful to be in Italy with her, but——

I turned from the window suspicious, for there was a feeling at the back of my mind that with her return an anxiety would come into my life that I would willingly be without. She had told me she had refrained from a lover because she wished to keep all herself for her painting, and now she had taken to herself a lover. She was twenty years younger than I was, and at forty-six or thereabouts one begins to feel that one's time for love is over; one is consultant rather than practitioner. But it was impossible to dismiss the subject with a jest, and I found myself face to face with the question—If these twenty years were removed, would things be different? It seemed to me that the difficulty that had arisen would have been the same earlier in my life as it was now, and returning to the window I watched the hawthorns blowing under the cold grey Dublin sky.

The problem is set, I said, for the married, and every couple has to solve it in one way or another, but they have to solve it; they have to come to terms with love, especially the man, for whom it is a question of life and death. But how do they come to terms? And I thought of the different married people I knew. Which would be most likely to advise me—the man or the woman? It would be no use to seek advice; every case is different, I said. If anybody were to advise me it would be the man, for the problem is not so difficult for a woman. She can escape from love more easily than her lover or her husband; she can plead, and her many pleadings were considered, one by one, and how in married life the solution that seems to lovers so difficult is solved by marriage itself, by propinquity. But not always, not always. The question is one of extraordinary interest and importance; more marriages come to shipwreck, I am convinced, on this very question than upon any other. In the divorce cases published we read of incompatibility of temper and lack of mutual tastes, mere euphemisms that deceive nobody. The image of a shipwreck rose up in me naturally. She will return, and like a ship our love for each other will be beaten on these rocks and broken. We shall not be able to get out to sea. She will return, and when she returns her temperament will have to be adjusted to mine, else she will lose me altogether, for men have died of love, though Shakespeare says they haven't. Manet and Daudet—both died of love; and the somewhat absurd spectacle of a lover waiting for his mistress to return, and yet dreading her returning, was constantly before me.

It often seemed to me that it was my own weakness that created our embarrassment. A stronger man would have been able to find a way out, but I am not one that can shape and mould another according to my desire;

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and when she returned from Italy I found myself more helpless than ever, and I remember, and with shame, how, to avoid being alone with her, I would run down the entire length of a train, avoiding the empty carriages, crying Not here, not here! at last opening the door of one occupied by three or four people, who all looked as if they were bound for a long journey. I remember, too, how about this time I came with friends to see Stella, whether by accident or design, frankly I know not; I only know that I brought many friends to see her, thinking they would interest her.

If you don't care to come to see me without a chaperon, I would rather you didn't come at all, she said, humiliating me very deeply.

It seemed to me, I answered, blushing, that you would like to see ——, and I mentioned the name of the man who had accompanied me.

If I am cross sometimes it is because I don't see enough of you.

It seems to me that it was then that the resolve hardened in my heart to become her friend . . . if she would allow me to become her friend. But in what words should I frame my request and my apology? All the time our life was becoming less amiable, until one evening I nipped the quarrel that was beginning, stopping suddenly at the end of the avenue.

It is better that we should understand each other. The plain truth is that I must cease to be your lover unless my life is to be sacrificed.

Cease to be my lover!

That is impossible, but a change comes into every love story.

The explanation stuttered on. I remember her saying: I don't wish you to sacrifice your life. I have forgotten

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the end of her sentence. She drew her hand suddenly across her eyes. I will conquer this obsession.

A man would have whined and cried and besought and worried his mistress out of her wits. Women behave better than we; only once did her feelings overcome her. She spoke to me of the deception that life is. Again we were standing by the gate at the end of the chestnut avenue, and I remember her telling me how a few years ago life had seemed to hold out its hand to her; her painting and her youth created her enjoyment.

But now life seems to have shrivelled up, she said; only a little dust is left.

Nothing is changed, so far as you and I are concerned. We see each other just the same.

I am no more to you than any other woman.

She went away again to Italy to paint and returned to Ireland, and one day she came to see me, and remained talking for an hour. I have no memory of what we said to each other, but a very clear memory of our walk through Dublin over Carlisle Bridge and along the quays. I had accompanied her as far as the Phoenix Park gates, and at the corner of the Conyngham Road, just as I was bidding her good-bye, she said:

I want to ask your advice on a matter of importance to me.

And to me, for what is important to you is equally important to me.

I am thinking, she said, of being married.

At the news it seems to me that I was unduly elated and tried to assume the interest that a friend should.

XII

It was three years after that the Colonel asked me to go to see some friends who lived in the Clondalkin district, and we followed the quays talking of the woman we were going to see and her sisters in Galway, but when we reached the long road leading to the Moat House, a group of trees (one of Stella's motives) recalled her, and so vividly, that I could not keep myself from speaking of her.

I have no peace since her death. Not every day, I said, nor every night, else I should be dead by now, or mad; consciousness is spasmodic, and no warning is given. Any sight or sound is enough. She painted those trees; they hang in my room, feathery against a blue sky that has changed to grey, to everlasting grey. A touch of rhetoric had come into my speech. . . . Yet I was speaking truthfully, and the Colonel tried to soothe me.

Blame! Of course no blame attaches to me, and yet . . . I may have wronged Florence. But I never felt any remorse on her account, only on Stella's. The question isn't whether I gave her the best advice that might have been given in the circumstances; I gave her the only advice that was possible for me to give. I knew nothing but good of the man; and the advice I gave was the only advice she would have taken. No, I cannot reproach myself with anything, and yet, and yet—— Why did I speak in his favour? And that is what I am afraid no one will ever be able to tell me. Was it because I wished to free myself from all responsibility? There was none. She took her chance with me and I took mine with her—— an equal chance in these days when women desert their lovers as frequently as men desert their mistresses. We were bound by no contract; it was no passing fancy, no

infidelity that parted us. Again and again I have given thanks to my stars, to my destiny, to the Providence that watches over me that it is impossible to trace any connection between my confession to her and her announcement to me of her marriage. More than a year intervened.

I can't see that any blame attaches to you for the advice that you gave.

Nor can I, yet her death overshadows my life, and for no reason. You see I told her, but not till she had admitted that she was going to be married, or was thinking of being married, that I had gotten a letter from Elizabeth, inviting me to come to see her. She had neglected me for years, ever since her marriage, but she is the only woman of whom I did not weary. A sister-mistress, I said. The Colonel, who does not understand these subtleties, kept silence. I had expected him to ask why I had told Stella of the letter, but the Colonel never asks personal questions, and I doubt if he was very much interested in my story. It may have been to drive her into this marriage that I told her that this other woman had written to me. What do you think?

I don't think it at all likely. She was determined on her marriage before she spoke to you about it. You have no reason to suppose that her marriage was not a happy one?

On the contrary, there are many reasons to think that it was a very happy one.

I don't see there is any cause for blame.

Nor do I, but her death is the one thing that I wish had not happened to me.

I waited for the Colonel to continue the inquiry, but he showed no inclination to do so, and his indifference exasperated me without shocking me as Edward had done when I had gone to him for sympathy, throwing all the

blame upon myself, and he had answered: Why didn't she mind herself?—the pure peasant speaking through him; and to escape from the atmosphere of the cabin I looked toward the Colonel. Any mention, I thought, of Sarsfield and the Siege of Limerick would rouse him; but having no desire for a historical disquisition at that moment, I began to think out the whole story again, finding some consolation in remembering that it was not for any mere woman I had crossed two seas, but for her whom I had sought for twenty years, turning from many fallacious forms and vain appearances, till at length I discovered the divine reciprocation of all my instincts and aspirations, the prophetic echo of my eternity, one summer's day among a luncheon party in the Savoy Hotel. Certain moments cannot pass from us, and I do not think I shall ever outlive the moment when I rose from my chair to meet my fate in the Savoy Hotel. My readers do not need telling that the moving tints of a shot-silk gown did not cover a dusky body from Italy or Spain; they have guessed already that my fate came to me out of Flanders in all the fair bloom of her twentieth summer; the full, flower-like eyes, the round brow, the golden hair, a dryad of Rubens in appearance and withal a dryad's nature. If Rubens's dryad were to come upon a traveller's fire in a forest, she would sit by it warming her shins as long as it lasted, and then depart for lack of thought to rouse the ashes into flame, and I have often thought that Elizabeth treats the arts as the dryad the traveller's fire; she warms her shins and departs, and overtaking satyrs and fauns in mossy dells abandons herself again to her instincts. I can pick up a thread, I have heard her say, but continuity I cannot abide; and feeling that it would have been stupid to answer: You look upon me as a thread that can be picked up and dropped with every change of

fancy, I fell to thinking how after a long day's journey I had come upon Elizabeth in a hilly country fronting great prospects of pasture in which kine wandered in long herds, and how she led me day after day through the woods, through sunny interspaces that I remember for many a pleasant frolic in the warm, fragrant grass. I remember the tasselled branches of the larches, the black-bird in the underwood, the thrush on the high branch, and the mocking laughter of the yaffle when he crossed from wood to wood; but Elizabeth remembers nothing; the dryad is without our human memories.

All the while of this summer pleasance somebody was dying near us; we were parted for many months, and when we came together again our love-story was no longer told in the woods. Yet she seemed contented with me for a lover, and so docile was she in this Michaelmas summer of our love that I said: There will be no change. I wonder, I asked her in my folly, if we shall love each other always, if in ten years' time—— She laughed, and three weeks after she took me aside to confide a strange project to me.

You don't mind, darling, if I don't see you to-night? I prefer to tell you——has asked me if he might come. I can't well refuse. You don't mind?

It would be vain for me to try to oppose your wishes, and you would hate me if I did.

How well you know me! How clever you are!

The pair of shanks and ears that had come into our garden through the underwood disappeared soon after, never to return; and we resumed our love-story; and then another pair of shanks and another pair of ears appeared, and these were succeeded by more shanks and ears, and the thought became clear that the last leaves were falling, and that no renewal of our love would ever

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happen in my life again. Love, she had said, is for the young and for the middle-aged, and I was growing old, the love of the senses was burning out, and it would be better to quench it by a sudden resolve than to keep blowing upon the ashes. By fifty, I said to myself, we should have learnt that human life is a lonely thing and cannot be shared, and that we are farther from our mistresses when they throw their arms about us than we are when we sit by the fire, elderly men, dreaming of the kisses given and the words said in distant years. Recollection is the resource of the middle-aged, so says Turgenev in one of his many beautiful stories. So did I reason with myself, and for two or three months I believed that love would never flame up in my life again, but one evening a lady whom I had known many years ago crossed a restaurant, and I ran to her for news of a friend of hers. She had not heard of Doris for some years, and in reply to my question if Doris were married she said she had not heard of any marriage, and becoming suddenly anxious about this girl I wrote to her relations, who answered that Doris was not married; but my letter had been forwarded to her, and to this letter came a delightful answer from Florac, a town that will be sought vainly on the map. It will be discovered, however, in a story entitled *The Lovers of Orelay*, and if the reader of *Vale* be wishful to know what happened at Orelay he can do so in a volume entitled *Memoirs of my Dead Life*, but he need not read this novel to follow adequately the story of *Vale*. The difference between one man and another is so little that I could come to no other conclusion than that dear Edward was right and that women cannot be adjudged an aesthetic sense. Man, I said to Dujardin, possesses an aesthetic sense, but he is not an aesthetic animal like cats, horses, or women, and he had answered me that woman's point of

view is different from man's, an argument that calls into question the reality of the visible world. I don't think the point has ever been fairly argued out; however this may be, I have never been able to get it out of my head that women are idealists, and that it is their natural idealism which enables them to ignore our ugliness. Extraordinary! I said, for looking into Doris's face I could see that she was pleased and happy; and the thought came into my mind that if Lewis Hawkins were to see us together he would be astonished by it, for it had always been his conviction that no woman could ever love me. I remembered his hardly concealed pity of my ugliness, his sudden inspiration that I should grow a beard for my chin deflected, and how I had been taken to a tailor, and instructed when the clothes came home how I must lean against the doorpost and look through the ball-room. The company should be gazed at with indifference; a nonchalant air, he said, attracted women, and many years of my life were spent trying to imitate him. Time, he said to me, wears away everything, even ugliness; you will be more interesting after thirty than before. And it was he who told me that Goethe had said, We had better take care what we desire in youth, for in age we will get it.

The pedant that was in Goethe muddled this utterance. We do not choose our desires; he should have said, If we desire in youth ardently, our desires will be fulfilled in age. But what is truth? the sage has often asked, and the aesthetician in me regretted Doris's taste for elderly men, and, stopping before the *armoire à glace* at Orelay, I had felt intensely that this love-story was no frolic of nymph and satyr, but a disgraceful exhibition of Beauty and the Beast.

Theories, however, avail us nothing, and it was not till several months after parting with Doris that I began to

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reconsider the important question—important, for no man lives who can say he is not interested in the question when a man should begin to try—how shall I put it? Well, to avoid unplatonic love encounters. But is an encounter ever platonic? A question for grammarians, for me it is to tell that a few months after my return to Dublin a lady called to see my pictures, and that the encounter of our lips sent the blood rushing to my head, and so violently that for ten minutes I lay where I had fallen on the sofa, holding my splitting temples. My time for love encounters is over, I said, reaching out my hand to her sadly. . . . She was too frightened to answer, and after proposing a glass of water was glad to get away out of the house. A sigh escaped me; my head was quieter, and, struggling to my feet, I stood by the window watching the hawthorns blowing. At last words came to me: Love's period is over for me. Life is forever changing, and very little remains after fifty for a man and still less for a woman. We are forever dying. Woolly bear is succeeded by the cricket bat, the bat is followed by the rod, the gun, the horse, the girl, and between fifty and sixty we discover that our love-life is over and done. Our interest in sex, however, remains the same, but it is an intellectual interest, changed, transformed, lifted out of the flesh. Our eyes follow the movement of the body under the silken gown, a well-turned neck and shapely bosom please us, and we like to look into the feminine eyes and read the feminine soul; but we do not kiss the point of white shoulders when thoughtless ladies lead us away after dinner into a corner of a shadowy drawing-room and cry in our ears, No, all is not over yet.

I wandered out into the garden, finding consolation in the thought that one does not grieve for a lost appetite, for a lost power, for a lost force. Horrible, I said, and

my eyes wandered over my garden, for the month was October. The dahlias were blackening and the Michaelmas daisies were growing slattern; soon there would be no flowers left but the flower that never fails to remind me of the mops with which the coachmen wash their carriage wheels. The swallows must be by now half-way across the Mediterranean. Soon they will be nesting among the stones of Cheops' Pyramid, and, my thoughts returning to myself, I said, My mother used to say that I was born with a silver spoon in my mouth. Celibacy is set above all the other virtues in Ireland, and the Irish people will listen to my exhortations now that I have become the equal of the priest, the nun, and the ox. Chastity is the prerogative of the prophet, why no man can tell, and dear Edward, to whom the virtue of chastity is especially dear, believes that it was the stories of what the newspapers would call my unbridled passions that had caused the Irish people to turn a deaf ear to my exhortations that they should speak Irish and write Irish, and to my prophesying that a new literature would arise out of the new language, or the old language revived.

My thoughts unfolded, and I remembered how strangely I had been moved the night in the Temple when Edward said he would like to write his plays in Irish. *The Tale of a Town* had brought me to Tillyra, and I had caught sight of Cathleen ni Houlihan in the dusk over against the Burran mountains as I returned through the beechwoods and the dank bracken. The rewriting of *The Tale of a Town* had awakened the Irishman that was dormant in me, and the Boer War had turned my love of England to hatred of England, and a voice heard on three different occasions had bidden me pack my portmanteau and return to Ireland. The voice was one that had to be obeyed, but Ireland had not listened to me and until now it seemed

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that I had misread the signs. But Nature is not a humorist. She intended to redeem Ireland from Catholicism and has chosen me as her instrument, and has cast chastity upon me so that I may be able to do her work, I said. As soon as my change of life becomes known the women of Ireland will come to me crying, Master, speak to us, for, at the bidding of our magicians, we have borne children long enough. May we escape from the burden of child-bearing without sin? they will ask me, and I will answer them: Ireland has lain too long under the spell of the magicians, without will, without intellect, useless and shameful, the despised of nations. I have come into the most impersonal country in the world to preach personality—personal love and personal religion, personal art, personality for all except for God; and I walked across the greensward afraid to leave the garden and to heighten my inspiration I looked toward the old apple-tree, remembering that many had striven to draw forth the sword that Wotan had struck into the tree about which Hunding had built his hut. Parnell, like Sigmund, had drawn it forth, but Wotan had allowed Hunding to strike him with his spear. And the allegory becoming clearer I asked myself if I were Siegfried, son of Sigmund slain by Hunding, and if it were my fate to reforge the sword that lay broken in halves in Mimi's cave.

It seemed to me that the garden filled with tremendous music, out of which came a phrase glittering like a sword suddenly drawn from its sheath and raised defiantly to the sun.



XIII

Since the day I walked into my garden saying: Highly favoured am I among authors, my belief had never faltered that I was an instrument in the hands of the Gods. But the chosen of the Gods are always given the needful means for the accomplishment of the Gods' mighty purposes, and for many months I had stood perplexed, but never doubting. I had striven to fashion a story, and then a play, but the artist in me could not be suborned. Davitt came with a project for a newspaper, but he died; and I had begun to lose patience, to lose spirit, and to mutter, I am without hands to smite, and suchlike, until one day on coming in from the garden, the form which the book should take was revealed to me. But an autobiography, I said, is an unusual form for a sacred book. But is it? My doubts quenched a moment after in a memory of Paul, and the next day the dictation of the rough outline from the Temple to Moore Hall was begun, and from that outline, decided upon in a week of inspiration, I have never strayed. I had not been to Moore Hall for many years, and loath to go there had often said to Miss Gough: Why should I go to Moore Hall? for it is all mirrored in memory; all the beautiful curves of the bay are before me, along Kiltome and Connor Island.

But if the lake hasn't changed, the country has, and you'll bring back many new impressions and moods.

You may be right. The gentry have gone and the big houses are in ruins, or empty or sold to nuns and monks, who are the only people who can afford to live in fine houses. Ballinafad is now a monastery. You'll see Ballinafad. I know it as well as Moore Hall. But you haven't seen it as a monastery?

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You may be right. I'll go. Nature is full of surprises. Prolific mother of detail, I'll go to thee.

Ballinafad lies away to the left between Balla and Manulla, and on stepping out of the train I said: To take in Ballinafad would mean a round of four or five miles. I will instead drive over from Moore Hall. But where is the Colonel's gig? and overtaking the porter I laid hand on his shoulder and he told me that if the Colonel's gig did not arrive soon, my best chance of getting a car would be in the village. He promised that as soon as his work was finished he would go down and inquire, but he was afraid Johnnie MacCormac had gone to Westport, and if Johnnie wasn't at home the only thing to do would be to telegraph for a car to Balla. And Balla being seven miles away, I should have to wait an hour and a half at Manulla Junction, watching grey sky and bridge, listening to the plaint of telegraph wires. The porter said he thought he heard a yoke coming up the road. He'll cross the bridge over beyant; and the bridge became at once the object of interest to me. It's his yoke right enough. You'll be off now in no time; and these words were spoken in a tone that convinced me the man was conscious of his melancholy lot. But I couldn't stop at Manulla to keep him company; as soon as I left he would be as lonely as before; and the Colonel's groom being anxious to excuse himself for being late told me he had gone to Derrinanny to sleep with his wife overnight.

I wonder where the station-master and the porters live?

Are you after leaving anything behind you, sir?

No, I was merely wondering what they do when not at work at the station. There are only two trains in the day. The boy thought there were three, but he would

be able to find out at the grocer's. So there is a shop in Manulla?

We'll be passing it in a minute, sir; we're just going into the village now.

Nobody was about; we saw neither cat, nor dog, nor pig in the muddy street; the groom mentioned, however, that the Colonel knew the priest, and as soon as we passed his chapel the fields began again, uneventful little fields, for there was neither tree nor brook to be seen, nor any one at work in them. Great stones had rolled down from the walls into the boreens leading from the main road up a landscape that it would be flattering to call hilly; it was merely a little tumbled. Over the hill-side a cabin showed sometimes, and at last a dog bounded out of one, and I said:

Where there's a dog there's a man, and where there's a man a woman isn't far off—isn't that so?

The boy did not answer, and, as seemingly he could not be persuaded into talk of any interest, I continued my survey of the country, noticing, for lack of something else to do, that it had flattened out without becoming a plain, and that the clouds were gathering on the horizon in a mass foretelling a downpour. But to mention that we were in for a wetting would only provoke a monosyllable from the boy. On the whole, the better chance of conversation seemed to be in a comparison between the Manulla and the Balla Road.

The Colonel thinks this is the easier road.

It doesn't seem to be quite so hilly, but it is treeless, whereas on the Balla road there are trees nearly all the way to Moore Hall. Ballinafad—by the way, Mr. Llewellyn Blake has settled the monks at Ballinafad, hasn't he?

So I've heard tell, sir.

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And how do the country people like that, and they going to get the estate divided between them?

The boy called to the pony, and I had to repeat the question.

The monks is giving fine wages at Ballinafad.

But how much they were paying he could not tell, and I tried to forget his presence, remembering that on the road out of Balla we leave Athy Valley on the right, and I took pleasure in recalling Sir Robert Blosse and Lady Harriet; their children I never knew. A little farther on was Browne Hall; Edith and Alice were beautiful girls. The Browne Hall and the Ballinafad estates were contiguous, and Joe Blake going off to Castlebar races with his arms round his serving-maid's waist rose up in my mind as if it had been yesterday. And two miles farther up the road is Ballyglass, our post town; the mail coach used to change horses there, and I remembered my mother reining in her ponies so that we might have a good view of the coach as it came swinging round the bend. The men that clipped horses lived in Ballyglass, in a cottage with a pretty flower garden in front—a rare thing in Mayo; and from the gate of Tower Hill to Carnacun the road is wooded, between Carnacun and Moore Hall the hills are naked, and the Annys River dribbles through the low-lying fields under Annys Bridge to Lough Carra.

We shall turn into the Castlebar road presently, shan't we?

Yes, sir, round by Clogher.

Clogher! the name carried my thoughts over the years to the time when we went thither to gather cherries and were suffered to tear down branches unreprieved. There were four girls at Clogher—Helena, Lizzie, Livy, and May. Lizzie was the merriest, and her inventiveness won my

father's admiration, for, needing a hearth-rug for her doll's house, she set a trap and caught a mouse. My father delighted in this association of images—a mouse-skin rug for a doll's house; and as we drove toward Moore Hall it seemed to me that I could see Clogher and its dead girls quite plainly. No more than a little mist had come between us. In another instant I shall be pondering on life and its meaning, I said, and looked round for something in the landscape to which I might direct the lad's attention. May we not hope for a fine day after all? I asked him, and the question seemed legitimate enough, for at that moment a ray lit the worn field in which a yoe bleated after her lamb to come at once to relieve her udder. He did not answer, so I pressed him with:

The lamb is the first sign of spring. The lamb comes before the daffodil. Do you know the flower?

Do you mean the daffydowndilly, sir?

That's what old Betty MacDonald used to call them.

We're just turning into the Clogher road, sir.

Yes, and yonder is the police-station, and beyond is the cross-road—to the right Castlebar, to the left Carnacun.

You've a fine memory, God bless it, yer honour.

The whitewash of the Clogher police barracks struck through the trees the same as forty years before, and I began to wonder what answer the boy would make if I were to tell him that the trees had not grown a foot within forty years. I suppose the police are always after the girls now as they were in my time? and the boy answered me: Them fellows do be too busy oiling their quiffs to put the comether on the girls.

As soon as we pass the barracks, I said, we shall turn to the left and there will be hazel bushes and rocks on both sides of the road, and about two hundred yards farther on we shall get a blink of Carnacun Lake where the hill

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drops. But the groom was not listening, and I fell to thinking of the pretty brooks one sees in England, purling and curling between low green banks, and shadowed by willow-trees. The willow follows the brook, and the Irish landscape lacks brooks and willows. Lakes are not in my temperament, I said; and set myself to remembering the many different lakes that we catch sight of from our roads; and then my thoughts were whisked away to Domnick Browne, who went to New Zealand, taking with him a bundle of hazel rods for walking-sticks, forty years ago, and did not write to me till he discovered that he could trace me no farther back than Charles V., but himself went back to Charlemagne. A wonderful thing life is, I said, and began to notice the endless stone walls between Moore Hall and Manulla, loose walls dividing little fields with a hawthorn growing in one corner and two magpies flying—whither? The people and the country are still savage, I mused, and Ireland is without pleasant objects to look upon, though why there have never been windmills in Ireland it would be difficult to say, for there is plenty of wind. In my childhood there were a few water-mills, and it was pleasing to recall the day when the governess and the Colonel and myself had tripped over to Tower Hill to watch the mill-wheel. But long ago that mill stopped working. Yonder is Carnacun Lake, behind a scrubby hillside with the pines forment it, as the groom would say if he could be persuaded into speech. The lake seemed smaller than I remembered it, but he could not tell me if it were drying up. I looked forward to the cross-roads, and it was pleasant to see that the smith's forge was still there, and Grayon's house, one of my tenants, the tenant of Ballintubber, a wealthy man, even forty years ago, for he could afford to lend me two hundred pounds . . . money spent during my minority. The chapel stood up over the

village on a knoll, and the fringe of trees about it was as ragged as when our carriage used to turn in the gateway. The smith's house and three or four cabins with sagging roofs were still the village of Carnacun; nothing had been added or taken away, and I looked out for the house licensed to sell beer and tobacco. It was there, as dark and as dismal as of yore, a threshold that any moralist would approve, and above it was the great wall of the ball alley denounced by Father James Browne in his sermons: You think I don't be hearing your brogues about the doorways, and after I have gone up the steps to the altar, he used to say. And now the rival of his Mass had fallen into ruins, some of the cut-stone had tumbled out of the high wall, weeds had sprung up in the alley, and Father James's house, to which I liked to ride my pony for a Latin lesson, was a ruin too. The present priest lives higher up the hill, in a two-storied house with plate-glass windows; but does he read Virgil for his pleasure and drink as good port as Father James? Be this as it may, it will always seem to me that a great deal of the character of the village of Carnacum has gone with the old cottage under the ilex-trees, the ball alley, and Father James Browne. His image has nearly faded from my mind, but I can still recall a high-shouldered man with a large hooked nose and a complexion like a Crofton apple, whose wont it was to walk about the parish in a torn cassock seeing that everybody was about his business. He would hop over the wall down into the road and out of the road again, on to the path across the triangular field to the school-house over yonder on the hillside. Why, Misther School-masther, do you mind being called the school-masther? You are the school-masther just as I am the parish priesht. I don't mind being called the parish priesht. I like being called the parish priesht, so why should you not like being called the school-

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master? So class distinctions were beginning to jar even then, I said. And to this school we owe the disappearance of the Irish language from this part of the country. I remembered the children returning from this school along a road that winds through damp fields on one side, melting almost into bog about the Annys River; on the other side the land rises, and all the cabins appeared just as I had left them; a little improvement was noticeable in the last one; a sty it used to be in old time, amid cesspools, unfit truly for an animal to live in. My hope often was that no human being would come out of its doorway until we had passed it by, and I recalled the satisfaction with which I learnt one day that this cabin was not on our but on the Tower Hill property. I anticipated the elder-bushes a few yards farther on, and could still see my mother and my governess in my thoughts gathering elder flowers for they were supposed to be good for sunburn, and myself cutting elder stems to make pop-guns. A path leads over the hill to the right, and down to the left a boreen runs along one of our woods, to Runninea, a Tower Hill village by the Annys River, and the house under the pines where the main road strikes through is a wood-ranger's lodge, the dwelling of a man called Murphy, whose welcome I used to dread; for, like a great big dog, he would run out of his house or saw-pit when he heard the wheels of the car, and his bark of welcome followed us until we reached the little bridge that spans the bog drain. In those days a path was a wonderful thing, much more wonderful than a road, and there was an enticing little path by the bridge-head. My governess forbade it; but one day I succeeded in persuading her to wander down it, and we had followed it through some young fir-trees; and yet undaunted I had implored that we should follow the path through a wood, and it had led us at last to a field golden with buttercups and a drain in

which wild irises grew. A little farther on we spied another path leading up the hillside, a dark and suspicious path, but a girl who dropped a curtsey told us that it would lead us right on to the stables of the Big House. We had dared to follow it too; and had come upon dells, open spaces, and copses, and trees of every kind; silver firs in whose vasty heights I was certain there were wood-pigeons' nests; and as we descended the hill on the other side a rowan delayed us; the berries were just beginning to redden, and immediately after we were in the bog road which was well known to us, and at the end of our adventure. Red rowan berries and blue irises are not of the same month; two memories seem to have got mingled. No matter, this wooded hillside was once full of adventure and mystery, and there was a dark place under the turret at the end of the garden into which I did not dare to go, bramble-covered hollows into which I used to peep and then run away, afraid to look back. But the day came when I pushed my way through the dark coverts, and lo! there was nothing. Suddenly the pony stopped, and whilst the driver opened the gates I admired the fine iron-work and the cut-stone pillars topped with round balls that the Colonel had brought from Newbrook, and it looked handsomer even than I had expected, though the Colonel's praise had led me to expect a good deal. It had opened upon one of the Newbrook avenues a hundred years ago; cut-stone was not so costly then as it is to-day: even so, money must have been more plentiful in those days, for the gateway obviously represented a great deal of labour. In those times everything came off the land: mutton, beer, butter, bread, jam; the stewards, gardeners, butlers, and huntsmen came from the village, the housemaids too, for feudalism had lasted in Ireland down to 1870. But the peasants have come into possession of the lands from which they were

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evicted, and are now felling the trees of the beautifully timbered parks—trees two hundred years old are being sold at eighteen-pence a piece at Newbrook. And the trees that I am now looking at—the Moore Hall trees—will soon after my death be felled, the gateway will be offered for sale again, and the cut-stone will find its way into cottage walls.

The pony stopped in front of the high pitch in the road, jerking me forward in my seat, and began the laborious ascent whilst I looked out for the tall laburnum up whose slippery stem I had never succeeded in swarming. It was among the gone; some hawthorn-bushes I missed too, and very little was left of the great lilac-bush that marked another path to the stables. We had looked forward to seeing it when we walked out with our governess, and I remembered how one day in mid-summer, after chasing through the woods, playing at Red Indians, yelling as we imagined Red Indians yell on the war-path, I had thrown myself into a haycock just by this lilac-bush, and planned the morrow: we would bring out whips with louder lashes and extend our adventure into mysterious places whither we had never dared to venture. But the next day the woods had lost some of their mystery. When summer returned the ghouls and fairies had died out of my imagination, and finding that I no longer experienced any desire to crack my whip, or to hide in the lilac-bush, or to roll in the hay, I went to old Joseph to ask him how this was. He answered I had grown older. . . . The drive turned round a hawthorn, passed through a glade, and I looked out for the next lilac-bush, for it was within its perfume that I had had my first religious conversation with the Colonel. It, too, was among the gone, but on the left, on the brow of the lawn, were two holly-trees into which I had shot many an arrow from the steps. But the laburnums that had

once decorated the head of the drive, had they died too, died of old age or for lack of human companionship, the laburnum being a familiar tree?

The last ascent is steep, and the pony walked every step of it, not consenting to trot till he reached the gravel sweep in front of the square Georgian house with the great flight of steps and big pillars supporting a balcony. On these steps a couple of red setters were always waiting—a special breed for which the house was famous. Nell rose up before me in her colour, in her shape, in all her winsome ways. A better dog never drew the scent of a covey of partridges or pack of grouse, and she would retrieve a duck far out in the reeds. My father often beat her for coursing hares, but despite these beatings she could not bear to be separated from him, and one evening he pulled her out of the lake into the boat saying that she had been swimming after us for more than an hour, and that if the large trout had not delayed us outside the reeds, she would have gone on swimming till she sank. Her son, Saddler, the biggest setter ever known—like a Newfoundland he was, and not a single white hair in his coat—used to lie in the hall on the mat. One day my father mentioned that the dog always snapped if he was stirred out of his sleep, and looked round with a bewildered air, and then suddenly seemed to recover himself. Saddler was suffering all this while from rabies, and as soon as the veterinary surgeon saw him he ordered him to be shot. Blush and Ruby were the last setters that adorned the steps, and the steps were the only part of the architecture that I ever liked, Moore Hall not being in my early taste, which was for brick, and perhaps it is still, for houses that have been added to by different generations rather than for grey square blocks with pillared balconies. Moore Hall had always seemed to me a Mansion House inferior to Clogher and Tower Hill. But it is superior to

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either, for it was built in 1780, and it was with a sense of relief that I had heard from the Colonel in Dublin that the roof had been raised by my father after winning some big races. The old roof was fifteen feet lower, and the slates that covered it were the small green Irish slates like tiles mortared together. I learnt from him that it had never been completely water-tight, and constant leakage having rotted the beams, the roof had to be raised. So my antipathy to this eighteenth-century house was to some extent justified. It was no longer eighteenth century; its eighteenth-century proportions had been spoilt by the new roof and by the plate-glass that my father had put into the windows of the hall and dining-room and drawing-room, and I felt sure that if I were ever to come to live in Moore Hall, the whole countryside would have to be searched for the old hand-made glass with rings in each pane like blobs of grease in soup. But I had always liked the imposing flight of steps, the iron railings, the pillared balcony, and the hall with its Adams ceiling, and should have liked the rooms on either side better if they had not been decorated in accordance with Victorian taste. It would seem that my father's journey to the East had to expend itself somehow, and being a clever man of many aptitudes he had designed a Greek room in an interval between racing and politics. His room had filled my childhood with admiration. But the straw colour and the blue-grey chosen for the walls had faded in the course of forty years, and the decorators that had come from Dublin when the Colonel went into his residence at Moore Hall had failed to divine the original tints in the faded; the Colonel had warned me that they had failed, but I was not prepared for so complete a failure, and the somewhat coarse, very nearly vulgar appearance that had been given to the room set me thinking that perhaps it would be well to replace all this plaster of

Paris with a pretty French paper. But who could restore the Adams ceiling? I asked myself, as I crossed a hall of fine proportions, and untouched, I muttered, as I went into the dining-room. My father's pilasters and parquets in variegated woods displeased me, and I felt certain that if Moore Hall were to be the end of my life the drawing-room and dining-room would have to be brought into harmony with the hall and the roof lowered some ten or fifteen feet; my father was too near the Georgian period to appreciate it, I added, and, raising my eyes from the carved merman and mermaid on either side of the fireplace to my ancestor in the red coat, I began to wonder if the painting were Spanish. . . . Be that as it may, my grandfather is a Wilkie for sure; and just as I had arrived at this conclusion the Colonel bounced in, fresh and rosy from the farmyard, all breeches and gaiters, and anxious to show me round the house, and I followed him into the hall. It opens on to a wide passage with a staircase at either end, and off this passage there were four rooms—our old school-room, the water-closet, and two more rooms opening one into the other, and known as the doctor's and the priest's room. All these rooms the Colonel had thrown into one, and he had brought down grandfather's bookcases and set them along the walls, achieving in this way a fine room, no doubt; but a long narrow room is un-Georgian, and character in a house is as important as in a man. No one sits in a long, narrow room. The fireplace is necessarily at one end, so while our left side is freezing our right is being roasted. Rooms should be square, there can be no doubt about it; and the present library is at another disadvantage—it overlooks a back-yard, a desert place surrounded by high walls, the top of the walls spiked like a jail. This desert place was once set round with outhouses; a scullery opened on to this yard, and the hen-house was next to it. There was

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the wood-house, and on the other side of the gate was a turf-house, and in the right-hand corner I remembered the great chimney of the brew-house where William Mullooney's father brewed the household beer. But that was before my time. Our beer came from Ballinrobe in the 'sixties; our beer now comes from Dublin.

In old times the back-yard was the centre of activity. The water for the house was brought from the lake in a water-barrel, the cart stood in the yard with the mule-boy beside it, and when the maids had filled their cans he put the mule into the shafts and went away to the lake again, leaving them to exchange words with the garden-boy, their gossip interrupted by the voice of the cook or the arrival of the ass from the bog with creels of turf, which the turf-boy would carry up the back staircase, emptying his load into the great barrels that stood on the different landings, filling with special care the barrel in Joseph Appleby's pantry, and I think it was Joseph who told me that these vats had come from Spain filled with port and sherry. And my thoughts passing into dialogue, I said: You have read all the family papers and can tell when these importations of wine ceased. After our great-grandfather's death probably. The Colonel could not tell me if this were so, and so inveterate a dreamer is he that he led me to the pantry window to ask me if it would be better to rebuild the outhouses or cover in the yard.

Cover in the yard! I said.

Why not? A series of arches and a terrace on the top.

And a flight of steps would serve from the higher to the lower terrace.

And on either hand vases——

Or rare pieces of sculpture, I said. The Colonel looked distressed. But how would the yard underneath be lighted?

By side windows.

And the drip? The rain would have to go somewhere. On our way to the bathroom he explained how the drip might be mitigated. Here, he said, is the bathroom, and I answered: 'Tis well: but the great eighteenth century knew not bathrooms, and we talked of the footpans and the bidets that once formed part of the furniture of every bedroom, and the disrepute into which bathing had fallen since Roman times, all through the Middle Ages, until Anglo-Indians reintroduced the habit of the thorough washing of the body into Europe. From the bathroom window we caught sight of the ruined privy under the beech-trees to which our ancestors were wont to adjourn in the morning, their pipes in their mouths, to talk the news, and the news was always of a racehorse, or a duel, or a hunt. We have improved upon those times, yet our neighbours still allow their dogs to deposit ordure upon our doorsteps in London. And whilst I meditated on humanity's slow advancement, the Colonel told me that he had chosen my father's dressing-room for the bathroom. I should never have had the courage to make the change, so real is my memory of the room as it stood in my father's lifetime, himself seated at the great bureau full of countless drawers at which he wrote his letters, or standing before the toilet-table between the windows covered with cut-glass phials of macassar oil, pots of bear's grease, many kinds of ivory brushes, tortoise-shell combs of all sorts and sizes, some destined for the hair of the head, some for the whiskers, relics of the days of his dandyhood, for he must have been a great dandy when Anonymous turned a shoe at Liverpool and Corunna won the Chester Cup.

He liked me to come into his dressing-room to talk to him while he lathered his face, and I remembered the lie I told him when he asked me if I had used the top of his

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silver shaving-pot to knock in a nail, and his alarm when I stumbled over the long s's in grandfather's edition of Burke's speeches. I have forgotten his reproofs to me, but can still see him in my thoughts opening the green baize door, and can almost hear him communicating the direful tidings to my mother. As she showed little or no alarm the governess was sent for and it was put to them: Had they ever known or heard of a child of seven who could not read Burke's speeches without faltering in an edition printed with the long s's? Before Miss Westby had time to answer my mother said that she didn't believe that any child of seven could read the long s's without faltering, and I can recall his long mouth speaking through the latter, telling that when he was three he used to read the *Times* aloud to his mother at breakfast. My mother's incredulity exasperated him; he ordered my governess and me to the school-room, and for days we sat reading a very indifferent history of England by one Lingard. We listened with apprehension while Joseph Applely brushed the master's silk hats and arranged his gloves for him in the hall, and we breathed more freely when we heard the hall-door clang, for we knew then he had gone to the stables to run his fingers down the horses' forelegs, and our hope was that his interest in the morning gallops would help him to forget my lessons. We passed the door of the room to which my mother had taken me to pray by the death-bed. It had not been in use since mother's death. The Colonel was with her; he had probably seen her die, and I supposed that that was why he had chosen for himself the two rooms at the end of the passage—rooms that I recollected as grandmother's rooms; and after visiting them he threw open the door of the summer room, a pretty room opening on to the balcony that the four great pillars support, and in an instant the room returned to what it had been forty years

before, my father sitting at the rose-wood table in the evening, drinking a large cup of tea, telling me stories of Egypt and the Dead Sea, Bagdad, the Euphrates and the Ganges, stories of monkeys and alligators and hippopotami, stories that a boy loves. We left the room to go to the rooms that were once grandfather's library. The Colonel had turned them into bedrooms. Grandfather's spirit seems still to animate these rooms, I said. The Colonel did not answer, and then I seemed to apprehend something that had hitherto escaped me: Moore Hall had always seemed alien and remote to me because it was pervaded by the minds of those that preceded me. My grandfathers and grandmothers were underground, but along the landings and in the large rooms opening on the passages I seemed to be aware of mentalities different from my own. Nor is it strange that this should be so, Moore Hall not having been subjected to any new influences after 1870; and going down to luncheon with my brother I felt I should never be able to live in this house; I should always feel my grandfather sitting by me wondering how it was that his grandson should practise so familiar a style, one so unlike Gibbon.

I should be always engaged in imaginary dialogues, I said, telling him he did not always write like Gibbon but like me in his preface to the *French Revolution*, and that the preface is the best part of it. If you were to say that, said the Colonel, he would answer, But you haven't read my history of the French Revolution. I asked myself if the Colonel intended a reproach. After luncheon, he proposed to show me the garden, but I could barely see it, so clear was my memory of the old eighteenth-century garden with its rows of espalier apple-trees and four great walnut-trees, one in each plot. The two great ilex-trees whose branches leaned in front of the turret were gone; the turret was in ruins, and the Colonel had felled a good many

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beeches along the twenty-foot wall to get light and air for fruit-trees. I was sorry for these.

But nothing grows under them, he explained, and led me round his peach and pear and apple and cherry trees, and while he explained the different varieties, I dreamed of the sweet-briar hedge that divided my mother's flower-garden from the plots in which we had once grown potatoes, cabbages, onions, spinach, chives, parsnips, cauliflowers, beans, asparagus. The asparagus-bed was never a great success, because of the walnut-trees which my father would not allow to be felled, his mother having planted them. Even more distinct in my memory than these trees was a great apple-tree—a very venerable tree, moss-grown and carious. It stood up a little beyond the flower walk, and near it, tucked away in a corner, was a dense growth of raspberry bushes enclosed by a thick hedge, a dangerous place in my imagination, one in which witches and other evil spirits were to be met, but the fruit tempted me, and my governess once boxed my ears for having hidden myself among the raspberries. And then we came upon the ruins of the greenhouse from which we used to steal the grapes, even when the door was kept locked, and my father once beat me with a horse-whip for breaking the panes, and now, elderly men both of us, the Colonel and I stood looking at a large cut-stone chimney that the Colonel had saved in case I should care to rebuild the greenhouse again. Cut-stone is very expensive, he said, but in our grandfathers' days, labour was cheaper; and we passed into the stables, none of which had fallen. There was the box in which Croagh Patrick neighed when the boy brought his sieveful of corn. How he plunged his muzzle into it! for he was a greedy feeder and ready to kick any one that came near him till the last grain was licked up. In the next box I had seen Master George, one of the best horses of his year, only a few

pounds behind Croagh Patrick at a mile and a half, and his superior at two miles, a terrible buck-jumper that would have dislodged any cowboy. The little ponies that these horsemen ride have not sufficient strength to throw them out of the high Mexican saddles, but Master George was sixteen hands and a half, and when his head disappeared between his legs it was no easy thing to keep on a six-pound saddle, and the tightest might have been flung out of it as I was three times one morning before breakfast, these falls irritating my father scarcely less than the long s's had done eight years before, compelling him to declare that no horse could unseat him. Joseph Applely smiled and went out of the room, and next morning my father was thrown in front of the house by the holly-trees, breaking his collar-bone, and the doctor had to be sent for. The Colonel started to enumerate: Wolf Dog, Anonymous, and Corunna have dragged hay out of those very racks, he said; and the coach-house recalled the coach hung on leather straps, and the great phaeton, likewise on leather straps, which hardly ever went out—a museum piece it was—and the tiny phaeton in which our mother used to drive Primrose and Ivory, a beautiful pair of ponies. The great fir at the back of the stable, in front of the hayrick, reminded me of the day that Joseph Applely took me out for a walk and taught me a little birdlore. The nest he showed me at the end of the bough was a goldfinch's, and we explored the woods together, and far clearer than to-day is that fragrant morning by the hawthorn-tree all in flower, Joseph lifting me up to see into the blackbird's nest. And I remember his voice: You mustn't touch the eggs, Master George, or the bird will forsake her nest. But how will the bird know? Let's try. We must go back, Master George, and if we return at once we shall get home in time for dinner. Let's go a little farther, Joseph, and find some more nests, I cried, for it

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did not seem to me that I should ever want dinner again.

But of what was the Colonel thinking? He is like his father, discreet; therefore not a man of letters, and we talked about the foreign firs which our father had planted in the 'sixties, and they seemed to me to be out of keeping with the landscape. Deodars may be suited to India, I said, and the *Wellingtonia* may be well enough in California, but here they are detestable; and far worse than the deodar and the *Wellingtonia* is that cypress *los*—— something, a tree of vile habit, sending down branches to take root, creating a little jungle. The Colonel admitted the habit, which he could not well deny, but he could not be persuaded to send round for a couple of hatchets, urging that felling trees is not the light work that I imagined it to be, the real reason being that he is as averse as I am from felling a tree, an aversion inherent in every sensitive nature, one might almost say in every nature except the woodcutter's; habit has blunted his; he has forgotten the original instinct of tree-worship, and perceives no longer the mystery of the vasty height sprung out of a single seed.

It was while I was thinking these things that the great walls of the farmyard rose up through the beech-trees, eighteen or twenty feet high, enclosing buildings of all kinds; stables for many cart-horses, granaries, barns, haggards, byres, smithies. A great deal of cut-stone had been used in these buildings, and the Colonel had saved many pieces from the ruins of the smithy, and these he said would come in useful when the time came to rebuild the farmyard. I liked to hear him dreaming his dreams while I meditated the question whether it were crueller to fell an ox or a tree. Behind that wall I had seen death for the first time, and with that kind of morbid pleasure which one feels in wounding oneself, I recalled how the shepherd had come one day into the yard driving half a dozen sheep before him, and

how, stopping in my play, I asked him why he had brought them from the fields. He answered me that Friday was always killing day, and putting out his crook he caught a sheep by the leg and felt for the fat; but not being satisfied with the animal, he allowed it to escape from him. Again he put out his crook and caught another, and again he was not satisfied; three or four sheep were tried; it may have been over the fourth that he muttered, This one will do, and led it into a corner. He and his boy stretched it on a slightly raised platform, and I asked why a bucket was placed under its head. To catch the blood, Master George, the shepherd answered as he sharpened his knife; and all this ritual was so enticing that I waited impatiently, and marvelled how it was that the sheep accepted death without a bleat, looking at us all the time with round, peaceful eyes, in which one could read neither love of life, nor fear of death, nor reproach. At last the eyes began to glaze, and I said to the shepherd, He has begun to die, and the shepherd pressed the sheep all over with his great strong fingers, urging the blood out of the wound in the neck. A few days later we were stopped in our walk by strange squealings, and scenting death, we appealed to a peasant; and he told us the butcher was killing pigs. We ran from our governess to see the pigs killed; we hid from her in a stable, and did not venture out till she had given up the search. I'm afraid you're late; he's a goner by this time, the peasant called after us, and when we arrived at the farmyard the carcass was being cut up and salted, and it would be some time before the butcher would be ready for another. The Colonel was a little diffident, uncertain whether he should stay to see a pig killed, but perhaps ashamed to go lest I might laugh at him. I took on authoritative airs, and bade the men hurry, returning now and again to the dung-heap to watch the pigs; there were eleven or twelve rooting and

rolling, happy, for the warm May sunlight caressed their sides, and apparently the screams of their fellow, now passed away into salt pork, had not disturbed them. Standing by them I picked out the biggest to be taken next, a pig-headed animal that contested every yard of the way, two rustics dragging him, and myself applying an ash-stick as a goad to his rump, and so cruelly that one of the rustics begged me to desist. He was bleeding under the tail when he was hoisted to the platform, and I felt ashamed of my cruelty; but he was a vicious brute that would have bitten the butcher had it not been for the rope about his snout. The butcher worked his knife slowly through the neck; and I plied him with questions: Why was it that pigs squealed when they were being killed and sheep died without uttering a bleat? Was it because it hurt pigs more to die than it did sheep? The butcher answered that pigs were noisy devils; somebody else added that they liked music, the bagpipes especially—answers that perplexed me; and I stood watching the blood, noting that with its flowing the squeals grew fainter and fainter. Dead he seemed such a stupid thing that I began to wish him alive again. My governess came into the cowyard saying she had been looking for us everywhere; our dinner was ready and we must come at once. But we haven't got the bladder yet. The butcher put his hand into the pig, tore it out, and handed it to us all stinking, our governess begging us to relinquish it, but we explained to her that we were going to blow it out and tie it to the end of a stick. We shall want two more bladders to beat each other with, I explained, and hurried the Colonel through his dinner. I would have brought my sister to the farmyard, where still some more pigs wallowed in the dung-heap outside Fright's stable, waiting the great experience of their lives—the butcher's knife.

Fright was a very handsome thoroughbred horse. He

had won some big races—the Cesarewitch, I think—and had gone to the stud with a deformed foreleg. My father was sure Fright would get winners if he were given the right mares, and the horse stood at Moore Hall for many years at ten pounds for thoroughbred mares, five for half-breds; the groom's fee was, I think, the same in every case, five shillings, and it was a very well-earned five shillings, for Fright needed a great deal of coaxing and encouragement before he showed any interest in the mare waiting for him in the yard outside his box, and he would certainly have gone to the knacker's if he had not neighed at the sight of some cart mares as Pat Kelly was bringing him home from exercise. And seeing that the mares were in the horse's mind, Pat began to tell me how he had spoken in the horse's ear. I was all ear, but Pat became reticent suddenly, and I was left pondering on the mystery of the continuous existence of life in this world.

I had been told, as every child is told, that babies were found under gooseberry bushes, and had accepted the explanation for some years, but between the ages of ten and twelve this explanation seemed hardly worthy of a boy's serious credence, and I had accepted the only other possible solution—that the female produced children unaided, and had begun to regret my sex when Pat Kelly's words made life seem again worth living. And not to find myself lacking when my day came, I used to bide in the carpenter's shop (the carpenter's shop being next to Fright's stable) so that I might hear Pat encouraging the horse with all kinds of coaxings: That's the old boy, that's the old man, and sometimes with so little effect that Pat's mouth would grow dry and he would curse the horse, and after cursing him he would start another set of coaxings, at the end of which, perhaps, the horse would be led out of the stable. It was then time for me to run out of the car-

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penter's shop and climb into one of the beech-trees overlooking the yard. One day I succeeded in persuading the Colonel to come with me, and that was the very day that Pat pointed us out to our father, who called to us to come down and caned the Colonel severely.

With all these memories flocking through my mind, it was sad to see the carpenter's shop in ruins, for in it I had spent many days with Mickey Murphy trying to learn to use the chisel, the plane, and the saw; but to no purpose did I labour, for I was without handicraft, less gifted than the carpenter's son. The Colonel had never collected hatchets and hammers, saws and chisels, planes and gouges, files and augers and gimlets, and perhaps that is why he had bought an old saw-mill in Ballinrobe and established it in a corner of the haggard where, once upon a time, there used to be great sport ferreting rats in the wheat stacks built upon short stone pillars about three feet from the ground, with a slab on the top to keep out the rats. But a mischievous boy, preferring a rick full of rats to his father's grain, will leave a plank for them to climb; and when threshing-day comes, the rats will scurry before a ferret with the dogs in full tilt after them; and if perchance a curious dog should try to appreciate the smells of rat and ferret and get his nose bitten, he will cry, You'll know better next time, Towser.

Outside the barn was a curious old threshing machine; two horses yoked to a great beam were the motive power; and these set going within a little stone circle all kinds of wheels and cog-wheels, and in response the winnowing machine inside the barn clattered; and when I came to see how the work was progressing, the women smiled upon me as they fed it with sheaves, asking me not to come too near lest I should have my fingers chopped. When the threshing machine went out of gear, the flail was flung, and dodg-

ing the thresher's weary flingin' tree, I would snatch a handful of grain and throw it to the finches waiting in the fir-trees on the hillside; not out of kindness of heart, but to entice them to their death; for when they assembled in sufficient numbers and were pecking unmindful of danger, two barrels of a fowling-piece were loosed upon them, and the ground was quickly covered with blood and feathers. A boy must learn to shoot, and whilst learning he fires at blackbirds and thrushes on the lawn, at the jackdaws as they hover about the chimneys, at the magpies as they fly from thorn to thorn, and the gulls flapping about the lake's shore are shot at again and again; gulls will dive after a wounded gull, and so the sportsman has a chance of shooting gulls till his heart sickens. And then wandering from the shore into the woods he will shoot a squirrel, a badger, a raven; hawks and owls he considers it his duty to loose upon, and wood-pigeons, too, for they are greedy birds and the farmer does not reap where he has sown. A boy lusts to kill; he will set dogs after a cat, and one day a very beautiful white cat was hunted out of the laundry into the lofts and then out of the lofts; and when the cat escaped by a broken window the dogs were set after her, and when puss crossed the road, the dogs in hot pursuit, she was forced to take to one of the trees growing out of the shelving hillside. The laundry-maids came running down the road pleading for their cat, but a barbarous boy climbed the tree and shook her out of the branches, and in imitation of a huntsman pulled out a knife and cut off the cat's head and distributed the flesh, treating the cat as if she were a wild animal—a hare or a rabbit—whose function it is to provide us with sport as well as food.

You would like to see the Stone Park, the Colonel said. The name of the field awakened a memory pleasanter than the infamous hunting of the cat, a gathering of nuts one

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summer evening long ago with two laundry-maids and a stable-boy. Perhaps there is nothing that takes a deeper hold on memory than the drawing down of boughs laden with fruit in the dusk of a dead day. We had gathered till strange shadows began to move about the fairy-ring spared by my father when he set to work to redeem the Stone Park from the hazel, more acres being needed for the growing of oats, so numerous were the race-horses at Moore Hall at this time. The corn prospered in the virgin soil and a great crop was expected; but our horses got none of it, for our pea-fowl had encamped in the middle of the field, leaving only a fringe, and the villagers muttered when the birds took to their heels or their wings: The master would have done well not to have meddled with the good people!

The good people seem to have recovered their holding, I said to myself, whilst seeking the road that our father had built. But all trace of it was lost in a jungle of black-thorn and hazel. Our mearing was the wall of the great park that had once extended round Castle Carra, and whilst the Colonel narrated his plans for the second ridding of the Stone Park by means of dynamite, I heard him break off in the middle of a sentence: The goats again! and away he went with thirty or forty goats trotting in front of him. It is just as I suspected, said he a little later. They feed on green boughs during the summer, but just at this time of the year they come over the deer-park wall in search of grass.

He told me that he had thought of shooting them, but was afraid to raise up hatred against himself in the country, for the goats were not altogether wild; for certain somebody had a claim upon them. And he continued talking, but for a long time my thoughts were among the days when we clambered the deer-park wall and wandered to

Castle Carra, a great stronghold in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, abandoned, so it was said, in the seventeenth, or later, the descendants of the great chieftains having gone to live in the modern house, now a ruin like the castle. In the 'sixties a herdsman lived in a corner of it; we bought goat's milk from him, and how good it was in the noggins, foaming over the brims! The circumstances of the abandonment of the castle must have been wonderful. Or was it abandoned by degrees? At one time all the headland was fortified, but of this vast castle little remains except the central tower or fort, now grown about with thorn and hazel. My mother's wont was to repeat verses from *Marmion* as we passed under the gateway, and our tablecloth was laid on the grassy space which we believed to be the ancient banqueting-hall. Above us were glimpses of staircases built between the walls, and one day I climbed up the wall and mounted the stairs. But the chieftains had left neither treasure nor pistols nor swords behind them.

We might do a little clearing every year, the Colonel broke in, and all the trees that we get out of the Stone Park can be cut up by the saw-mill, creating a provision of fuel for the house, and in ten or twelve years we shall find we have added many acres of arable land to the estate. Aren't you listening?

Yes, I'm listening, and I think you're right; in about ten or twelve years Moore Hall will have returned to the Moore Hall of before-times. But have you been to Castle Carra lately?

He had visited Castle Carra some three or four months ago, and the castle was crumbling; last Christmas there had been a great downfall; the old gateway had wellnigh disappeared, and he did not think the castle itself would last more than fifty years. The great modern or quasi-

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modern house to which the chieftains repaired when private wars were no longer recognised as lawful, is passing away, he said, even more rapidly than the castle. I found pieces of the great stone fox that stood in the middle of the courtyard and the two hounds one on either side among the brushwood. Another thing. Castle Island needs repair. Michael Malia was on the island last summer, and he tells me that the base of the old castle is insecure, but that a few pounds would make it safe.

My dear Maurice, it is sad to see ancient Ireland passing away before our eyes. But we cannot rebuild ancient Ireland, and it is clear to me that as soon as I am gone Moore Hall will be pulled down to build cottages in Derinanny and Ballyholly, or the house will become a monastery or a nunnery. Which would you prefer?

The Colonel sought refuge in silence, and I read in the melancholy that overspread his face that the abandonment of family property to the prelacy was distasteful to him. And now that Llewellyn has given Ballinafad to the monks, he may, I said to myself, be more willing than he was some years ago to allow me to bring up one of his children a Protestant, on condition, of course, that I leave him Moore Hall. I had written to him once on this very subject, and his answer had reached me in Paris. A very angry letter it was, characterising my proposal as infamous and outrageous. Why should my proposal be looked upon as infamous and disgraceful? I had asked myself, and I began to ask myself again the same question. He may, I said, think differently now; circumstances have changed. Moreover, the proposal might be put to him again in conversation; words pass rapidly; there is no time for anger if they be dealt out skilfully; and I thought how after dinner, when his wife had gone to bed and we were sitting in two arm-chairs before the turf fire, I might begin by complaining that

now that Stella and Walter Osborne and Hughes were gone, Dublin had become a little too small for me. He would ask me whether I was going to London or to Paris. Paris would introduce Dujardin's name, and I would tell him that Dujardin's ambitions were to found a new religion in which there was no dogma, only rite. The Colonel would shrug his shoulders and ask how rite could exist independently of dogma, and I would answer that there was no dogma in ancient religions. The Colonel would answer, Judaism, and I would explain incidentally that the Jews had never indulged in heresy hunting. It was not permitted to insult Jehovah, and anybody who did so was condemned to death, as Socrates was condemned for insulting the Gods. Dogma and its concomitant, heresy hunting, arose when? What Pope founded the Holy Order? The Reformation would be mentioned, and it would be an easy transition from the Reformation to my proposal.

We make these plans, but very rarely do we adhere to them; and after dinner, when we two were sitting in the drawing-room, without prelude or introductory matter of any kind, I said:

My dear Maurice, I have a proposal to make to you. I am quite willing to pay for the education of your eldest son, and to leave him any property and pictures that may remain after my death, but I should like to bring him up a Protestant. Our family is a Protestant family; there are one or two apostates, it is true, but——

I should never consent to what you are proposing. You needn't go on.

I'm sorry for that, for of course it is impossible for you to deny that Catholicism makes for illiteracy. As I have pointed out again and again, Catholicism has hardly produced a book worth reading since the Reformation.

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But I deny that completely.

It doesn't suit you to admit it. But this you will admit, that if Catholicism degrades, corrodes, paralyses, and stupefies the intelligence, its day is over.

I admit that, if your premises be correct; but I deny your premises.

To deny is easy; but if what I say be not true, if Catholics have written as well as Agnostics and Protestants, the books are known. Name them.

At the end of a long waste of argument, I said:

Well, if you are convinced that the Catholic is equal to the Protestant, why not bring the matter to the test? Do you bring up one of your sons a Catholic, I will bring up the other a Protestant, and back him to be the superior of the Catholic boy, to the extent of five hundred pounds. I'll be generous. If I win, I will give the five hundred to the Catholic as a sort of consolation prize.

The proposal you are making to me is utterly unacceptable and horrible. I can't think of anything more detestable than that I should give you one of my children to be brought up in a religion of which I disapprove, and that I should be tempted to do this by a promise that you will leave him money! If, later on, my children were to tell me that they preferred Protestantism to Catholicism, I don't say that I shouldn't be sorry, but I should do nothing to prevent them following the religion which they wished to follow, but if they were to change their religion in order to inherit property, or to get money, I should hate the very sight of them.

But, my dear Maurice, nobody except Cardinal Newman ever changed his religion for theological reasons. All changes of religion are brought about by pecuniary or sexual reasons.

The Colonel did not answer. He lay back in his arm-

chair white with passion, the first time I had ever seen him lose his temper since he was a little boy. It would have been easier to let the matter drop, but I had determined to make a last attempt to save the boy, and could not stop half-way.

You told me I libelled my great-grandfather when I hinted that he became a Catholic because it was impossible to carry on business in Spain as a Protestant.

And I say so still; but we're not talking now of our great-grandfather, but of my children.

But you knew that our great-grandfather never became a Catholic, and knowing the truth why did you conceal it? Because you are a Catholic?

We are talking now of the religion my children are being brought up in, and I say that your proposal is not an honourable one, and if possible it would be less honourable of me to accept it.

Everybody has his own ideas of honour; there is no fixed standard; but it is a very common thing, as you must know, that when parents are divided in religious beliefs some of the children are brought up in one religion and some in another, and it would be difficult to impugn the fairness of such an arrangement. I am prejudiced in favour of Protestantism for intellectual reasons, and because my life is moulded on facts rather than upon sentimentalities. And the answer I got from the Colonel was that I looked at the world through a narrow tube and could only see one spot at a time, and that my opinions were always as narrow as the tube; and then, getting angrier and angrier, his face bleaching with a passion which I could not help admiring, for at all events he was himself in this scene, he reminded me that I had said I would leave Moore Hall to his children, but no sooner had I said that than I began to impose conditions. In the beginning

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they were to learn Irish, that was the condition; now a new condition was to be imposed, they were to be brought up Protestants.

Not both, only one, I protested; and if I pay for his education you can't expect me to bring up a boy in a religion which I think paralyses the intelligence. Your concern is with the possibility of a future life, the soul's arrival in Purgatory and its subsequent release by means of Masses paid for the Pope's indulgences, and——

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And when on a subsequent occasion my brother told me, in answer to a question, that I had been paying fifty pounds a year to the Jesuits, and afterwards one hundred and thirty a year to the Benedictines for the education of my nephew, I uttered the cry or moan of a man taken with a sudden sickness. The sensation the news brought me was, strangely enough, physical, a sort of fainting in the very bowels, or else I cannot describe it. I wrote to you from Paris offering to pay for my nephew's education, I said, if he were brought up a Protestant, and the answer I got was that my proposal was a dishonourable one. How, then, could you think that I was willing to pay for a Catholic education? and it has been going on year after year and I was never told. His answer was that he would repay me; and with the transference of some hundreds of pounds from Cox's to the National Bank, the question of money would be settled between us. But there is no question of money, I bewailed. I don't care a fig for the money. But the deception . . . I could not answer him further; the shock of the discovery deprived me of any power of reasoning, and I ascended the stairs, thinking as well as I could that any calamity had been preferable to

the one that had befallen me, and that I should have been paying for the education of a Catholic while meditating *Hail and Farewell* rankled like salt in a wound. While writing *Ave* and *Salve*, I muttered, and a deeper sense of unhappiness than I had ever known before began to steal over me as I dragged my feet along the landing to the room in which I was to sleep.

I shall get no sleep to-night, I said, raising the blind in the hope that the moon shining on the lake would calm me; and my eyes roved over the dim outlines of the lake into the pearly distances neither blue nor grey. A moment later the words: He is a born Catholic, fell from my lips, and the phrase seemed to me to represent a truth hitherto unexpected or insufficiently appreciated. We do not acquire our religion, we bring it into the world. We are born Catholics or Protestants. Catholicism and Protestantism are attitudes of mind. And I pondered the question for what seemed a long while, awakened suddenly by the thought that if my nephews had a worth they would discover themselves to be Protestants. From eighteen to twenty-one is the time when we stick for ever or find a way out. Every man of worth chooses a religion for himself, and so my money has been only wasted; but it has not gone to the moulding of a soul. All the same, I would not have had this happen, no, not for all the money in the world. And I fell to thinking how I had laughed and jeered at dear Edward because he dreaded lest his money might be applied to the production of heretical plays; yet here was I suffering from the same dread. The perfect circle of the moon detained my thoughts a little while, and the lonely castle beneath it set me thinking of savage hordes of Welsh and Irish disputing for possession of the island. But however far our thoughts may wander we are awakened by the old pain. My senses sickened again.

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A judgment upon me, I cried, for having jeered at dear Edward! And at the words: dear Edward, my thoughts sped away to Bayreuth and returned to my brother and to our childhood. My mind, I said, is like an ever-veering wind, and sleep will be sought in vain; all the same, I must seek sleep. And all night long the same thoughts revisited me, marching round my brain like prisoners in a yard, high walls, and no strip of sky above the multitudinous bricks. Round and round they go, I cried, and then away went my thoughts again, and of what I was thinking when I fell asleep I cannot tell.

Your bath-water is ready, sir.

Yes, yes, I answered, and turned over. If I could only cease to think! But the moment I see him I shall begin to think again of Jesuits and Benedictines. Of what shall we speak? I asked, and going to the bath, and in the bath, and coming from the bath, I tried to discover subjects of conversation, lingering over my dressing, and so advantageously that Evelyn was dispensing tea and coffee when I entered the dining-room, and after breakfast I thanked her inly when she said:

Now, Maurice, won't you take George out and show him the new gateway, which he says he has not seen sufficiently?

The Colonel murmured some answer and, whilst hustling himself into his old yellow overcoat, he told me that the part of the ironwork missing from the gates brought from Newbrook had been supplied by the smith at Carnacun, and that he was curious to hear if I should be able to distinguish the old from the new. The stonework was complete, all except two knobs; these Michael Malia would be able to replace, and the cost would not be more than five or ten pounds a knob. His optimism was somewhat dismal, for I never imagined anybody living in Moore Hall again, and after viewing the gateway which had only cost

me forty pounds, we turned down the road to the gate lodge, now empty, the Colonel having succeeded in expelling its late tenant, his gardener. A gate lodge, I said, is generally beside the gate, but this one is fifty yards away. The Colonel declared it to be an excellent house, and I meditated, for this gate lodge was associated in my mind with many memories. It had a loft which was reached by a ladder, and I had often thought that I would like to sleep in a loft among the hay; and there was a deep drain beyond the garden at the edge of the wood, and down this drain I had often floated on a raft made out of a plank and the shutters from the windows, into deep water under the bridge. It was a thrilling experience to find oneself on a raft under an arch, but the novelty wore away quickly, and one day I had undertaken a longer voyage, punting the raft down the drain into the lake. But in the lake the punt pole (a branch torn from a tree) had proved insufficient, and the freshening wind had carried me and the raft out into the open lake, and looking at the Colonel I remembered him crying among the rushes while I debated my chances, whether it would be better to remain on the raft trusting it to carry me to some island, or to throw myself from it into the lake in the hope that the water was not deep enough to drown me. The waves leaped higher and higher, threatening to wash the shutters from the plank, till at last it became clear that the chance that the water was not deep enough to drown me would have to be accepted. It rose to my chin, lifting me off my feet, and I continued wading, hoping not to stumble into a hole. Yes, I said to the Colonel, I had a near escape that day from drowning, and now I can still see you running along the strand crying for some one to come and save your brother. If the accident had happened a few years before, he said, you would have been drowned; the lake was

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deeper, and he told me how in the 'sixties a young engineer had come down from the Board of Works with a project for draining Lough Carra into Lough Mask, but our father had offered such opposition to the scheme that it had to be abandoned. Up to the 'seventies, I answered, we were feudal lords, and he was listened to in the House of Commons when he said that he could not allow a small Sahara to be created before his front-door. We controlled our landscapes in those days, or it may have been that the shores of Lough Mask were implicated in this drainage scheme. As likely as not it was discovered that the draining of Lough Carra would inundate the shores of Lough Mask. A weir was therefore constructed in the river Robe, said the Colonel, and his words revived the day I had brought a boat from Lough Carra to Lough Mask and had put back frightened by the great waves of that gloomy lake.

Our father saved Lough Carra, but it is for certain many feet lower than it used to be; and I reminded the Colonel of the great pleasure-boat about whose rotting planks we often played in childhood. It had been allowed to rot under a group of pines, standing some fifty or sixty yards from the lake's edge, by the side of a walled trench, once its harbour. For to what other purpose could the walled trench have been put? we often asked our governess, our subsequent questions drifting into dim speculation as to how many pounds it would cost to mend the boat; and if Mickey Murphy could mend it if he were paid ten pounds. This rotting boat appealed to our imaginations, for its seats would hold a dozen or more ladies and gentlemen, and there were row-locks for eight oars, and the Colonel and I were wont to imagine the great picnic-parties that had sat under the sail, for there was a hole in one of the seats for a mast. Was Castle Hag or Castle Island the

destination of these picnic-parties? we asked each other; and was there a turkey stuffed with chestnuts in the hamper? We were certain that there were cakes and fruits and jams, and that the footman spread a snowy cloth in the glade under the castle wall. Our governess read while we dreamed. We! Did the Colonel dream? If he did, he never told me his dreams. He is reticent about his dreams, but garrulous about externals, and as we walked round the shores of Lough Carra for the last time, he regretted that he had not brought with him the key of the new boat-house, for he would like to show me his brother-in-law's boats, rowing-boats, skiffs, wherries, a steam launch, and a yacht. A shrunken lake for certain, else the reeds would not have thriven. — had had to cut a passage through them for his boats, and the Colonel unfolded a project to me whereby the lake might be cleared of reeds, and before he had reached the end of his project we were at the bridge that stretches over the turlough (a turlough in Mayo is a low-lying field, that is flooded in winter), and he pointed out the pump that drew the water from a well out in the middle of the lake—a well that old Betty MacDonald told us was once up in Kilttoome, but it had suddenly descended and had sprung up in the lake, with a ring of grass around it, for it was a holy, or maybe a fairy, well. She was not quite sure which. The pump had cost me two hundred pounds, but I had to admit that if people were to live at Moore Hall, a pump was necessary. The walls require mending, I remarked, coming upon a cottage that my father had built but had never put a roof on; and I added, A ruin that will supply excellent material for the building of necessary walls.

But the Colonel said there was plenty of stone, and no need either to pull down the cottage or to roof it. The walls were probably too rotten to bear a roof, and, speak-

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ing of the Congested Districts Board, he said, They even ask for the paddock, the field behind the cottage. The fields beyond the gate were Corrou, the New Gardens, Lough Navadogue, Rochetown, and our father's race-course, on which he had trained Corunna, Wolf Dog, Anonymous, Croagh Patrick, and Master George, to number a few of his famous horses, and all these fields the Congested Districts Board required.

So that the holdings of three tenants might be extended, the Colonel said; and if you yield, Moore Hall will be no more than a villa in the midst of a wild country; cottagers within the woods right up against Kiltooke, and who can say that pigsties will not be built? The present cottagers would probably prevent the pigs from rooting in the graveyard, but the cottagers fifty years hence will have no scruples. The Board insist on acquiring all the land right up to Kiltooke, and at their own price, and if you refuse to sell, the Board may refuse to buy your other estates, Ballintubber, and those in Galway and Roscommon. A very serious matter for you if the Board refused to buy.

How is that?

The next move of the Board will be to stir up all the tenants to combine in a campaign against rent—like putting a stick into a wasp's nest, the Colonel added, with a deep note of anger in his voice. So far as I understand, the proposal is to leave you Derrinrush.

We returned to Moore Hall, and so gloomy were our thoughts that we turned aside instinctively from the Dark Road and ascended the steep lawn together.

My dear Maurice, Moore Hall was built in feudal times. Read the tablet over the balcony, 1790, and feudalism continued down to 1870; a big square house on a hill, to which the peasants came every morning to work. You remember the bell that hung over the laundry? It rang

at seven, and before it ceased clanging our labourers assembled and were bidden to their day's work; and a shilling a day was fine wages in those good times. And you remember the women coming from the village with their husbands' and brothers' dinners? Half a dozen boiled potatoes tied in a cloth, and a great dinner it was if they got a noggin of buttermilk from the cook. They ate their potatoes and drank their buttermilk under the hawthorn hedge in the backyard, if the day were fine, and, if it were wet, in byre or stable. The young men wore corduroy trousers and frieze coats, the old men were still in knee breeches and tall hats; a red petticoat hung to the women's knees and they wore a printed handkerchief round their heads. We were kings in those days; little kings, but kings for all that, with power of life and death as has been said and truly, for we often sundered wife and husband, sister from brother; and often drove away a whole village to America if it pleased us to grow beef and mutton for the English market. And in those days the peasants were afraid to thatch their cottages lest their rent should be raised, nor was there one peasant in our villages or in the Tower Hill villages worth a ten-pound note. The Colonel asked me if I remembered a cabin in the middle of Annys bog, a dwelling hardly suited for an animal, yet a man and woman lived there and children were born in it, and I answered him: We used to pass it on our walks, you and I and our governess. Yes, I remember it, and I remember one day up in the mountains while grouse-shooting stabling my horse in a man's cabin. But we shall never be able to do it again. The landlords have had their day. We are a disappearing class, our lands are being confiscated, and our houses are decaying or being pulled down to build cottages for the folk. All that was has gone or is going. Moore Hall represents feudalism.

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I think that anybody who would like to live in a comfortable house——

Square rooms and lofty passages conformed to the ideas of our ascendants, and jerry-built villas, all gables, red tiles, and mock beams, stand for modern taste and modern comfort; hot water on every landing and electric light. Nobody wants a real house unless an American millionaire, and it is not because of its reality that he wants it but for its unreality. It is unreal to him, and having a great deal of money, he indulges in eccentricity. In this way the old world is carried on by Americans; even in England there are very few houses that are the capitals of the estate they stand in as Moore Hall was up to fifty years ago. Moore Hall is out of date, and it astonishes me that you don't feel it. I wish in a way that I could summon sufficient courage to pull it down and sell it; it would make excellent rubble to build labourers' cottages, and if I could I would cut down every tree and lay the hillside bare. Why not, since I know it will be laid bare a few years after my death? The fate that overtook Ashbrook hangs over Muckloon. It will be given over to peasants, like Ashbrook. You remember the piece of tapestry that was woven in Ashbrook by our great-grand-aunt or grandmother and is now on exhibition in South Kensington Museum? I wonder how long it will be before another piece of tapestry like that is woven in Mayo. In the dining-room hangs a portrait of a lady with a dog, painted by a young girl in Galway. Is there one in Galway now who would paint as well? No. With all our so-called culture, sculpture, painting, architecture, and the art of the use of words are disappearing. By the way, Maurice, I don't know whether you have heard my theory that the age of art is over as much as the Stone Age.

People have always been saying, he answered, that the

age of art is over. I could cite you many passages from Elizabethan writers in which they deplore the decline of art and the English language. They were wrong, I replied, that is all. But it cannot be denied that there was neither art nor literature in Europe in the Middle Ages, from the sixth, shall we say, to the twelfth century? The Colonel answered me that art cannot flourish in the midst of invasions; and he began: Rome was sacked by Alaric in the fifth century, and in the same century Europe was overrun by the Huns, headed by Attila, and a century later the Saracens invaded Europe and were defeated by the French at the Battle of Tours; and as we walked toward the house he explained that if this defeat had not taken place we might all be Mohammedans now.

But do you think that the sleep of Mohammedanism is a deeper sleep than the sleep of Catholicism? I beg your pardon for introducing the religious question. You are appreciative of the trend of the past, but seem blind to that of the present. I cannot help being sorry for my poor country that has never been able to show a brave face to the world. Some extraordinary curse seems to have been laid upon this land in the tenth century or about that time. Ireland was something then; she had a religion of her own—and she was inventing an art of her own. Up to the tenth century it looked as if God intended to do something for Ireland, and in the tenth or the eleventh century he changed his mind, and ever since the curse seems to have been deepening. In another fifty years Ireland will have lost all the civilisation of the eighteenth century and will be a swamp of peasants with a priest here and there, the exaltation of sacraments and whisky her lot, and a hundred legislators united only in protecting monkeries and nunneries from secular inquisition. The Colonel did not agree with me that the gentry were dying out of Mayo. The

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Brownes of Breaghwy and the Lynches of Partry had been building lately. My dear Maurice, you will not see things as they are. Or is it that you don't remember Mayo in the days of the gentry as well as I do? Athy Valley is empty, and you told me that you and an old peasant had searched for traces of Browne Hall, but could find none. Ballinafad is a monastery. The Blakes are still in Tower Hill, and a last Lynch lives his lonely life in Clogher. Cornfield is empty, and will be pulled down very soon. The Knoxs have left Creagher. Newbrook is sold, and the masonry distributed—part of it is at the end of the drive. Brownestown House was burnt before our time, but not much before it. How many more? The Lamberts are gone. What was the name of their place? Brook something.

Every class has its ups and downs, and there is no doubt that ours is going through a crisis.

No crisis whatsoever. We have outlived our day, that is all; and in thirty years we shall be, as I have said, as extinct as the dodo, unless religion comes to our aid. You seem not to have heard of the New French party—the Catholic Atheists? Religion is to be taught again in the hope that man may be persuaded to forego the joy of a woman's bosom for the sake of Abraham's. The Colonel laughed, but he was not pleased, and to break the irritating silence he told me that Castle Carra had been sold to the Congested Districts Board, and out of the arch, built during the famine, a row of concrete cottages had been run up according to specifications. The old deer park will supply some material, I said. The jungle will be grubbed up; you will get rid of the goats. And we talked on in this fashion, and after dinner resumed the same talk, saying the same things over and over again; and when we ascended the stairs to our beds, about eleven o'clock, the

Colonel promised to drive me over to Llewellyn's monastery next day.

Llewellyn Blake is my uncle, my mother's youngest brother, and he came into the property of Ballinafad on the death of Joe Blake, famous in the county Mayo for many race-horses and a love-story. Joe seems to have been the only one in the family whose soul did not trouble him. His brother Mark, from whom he inherited the property of Ballinafad, was a fine old country rake, leaving samples of his voice and demeanour and appearance in every village, and then going to Dublin to repent his sins, attaining in the last years of his life the spectacular appearance of Father Christmas, causing much annoyance in the chapels that he frequented from his incurable habit of interrupting the services with Oh, Lord; oh, Lord; my unfortunate soul! Llewellyn is as tall as his brother Mark, two or three inches over six feet, large in proportion, with sloping shoulders, snapping his words out and then relapsing into silence. He used to be much admired at dances in the drawing-rooms of Merrion and Fitzwilliam Squares, and in the old Royalty Theatre he patronised the Muse Terpsichore. But those days are over and done with, and, like his brother Mark, he has become uneasy about his soul. He was warned of its disease by me years ago, but he paid no heed to my warnings, and convinced of its continuous existence, and that priests can help him to save it, he has founded a monastery. I should do the same if I were a Roman Catholic, but the Colonel, who is one, would have me try to prevent the founding of this monastery by action at law, and I am still trying to understand the Colonel who believes in the efficacy of masses for the dead, but seems to think that Llewellyn's relations should come before his soul—a most impossible Colonelesque argument; and the spirit fumed within me to ex-

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press my point of view; but I put chains upon my spirit, and Carnacun went by for the last time. We were on the heights of Ballyglass when the struggling spirit sundered its last fetters, and I said:

How is it that you disapprove of this monastery? It seems to me that you should, on the contrary, urge me to found another at Moore Hall. You believe that masses for the dead will get your soul out of Purgatory. If you don't, you are not a Catholic. Now, why shouldn't we have a little plump of monasteries in Mayo? At Moore Hall we could have Benedictines; at Clogher Franciscans. Lynch is a Roman Catholic: he has got no children, what better could he do? At Tower Hill some arrangements might be come to with the Blakes to put in Trappists. You don't know what order is in Ballinafad? The Colonel answered sullenly that he was not sure whether Llewellyn had founded a mission house or a monastery. Well, no matter. This little plump of monasteries sending up prayers for your soul, for Llewellyn's soul, for Lynch's soul, and for the souls of all at Tower Hill; and the prayers bringing down the archangels constantly, crooks in their hands, pulling you one after the other out of Purgatory. The Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost; nectar perpetually on tap, and aureoles that never wear out. A rich prospect before you all!

An ironical smile, deliberately introduced, pervaded the Colonel's face, and it said as plainly as words: How very superficial you are, and vulgar, quite vulgar!

My dear friend, I am sorry for bringing up this question again. It is the fault of Llewellyn Blake.

Count Llewellyn Blake. He has been made Count of the Papal States, said the Colonel.

But why laugh? In his eyes the Pope is not only a

spiritual, but a temporal power. His title is more valid than any other. Don't you think so?

The Colonel never answers these questions, and while wondering at my own detestable character in thus plaguing him, I looked round the fields. They seemed very small and dim. And yet, I said, that gleam of light falling across the worn fields reminds us that summer is coming in. The fine days we meet in January are illusory, but the ray that lights up the dim February landscape is a herald. We believe in it, and that is the principal thing.

A peasant stood in the roadway in front of the car, and the Colonel had to pull up.

Long life to yer honour, cried the old man, and in his eyes I read the reverence of yore. He was a hairy and boisterous fellow, and we had to listen to his description of his house, which he said was damp enough to give a wild duck rheumatism. I promised to help him, and we bade him godspeed. A godspeed, I said, which is probably for eternity.

We are very late, the Colonel muttered. It was unlucky meeting him.

Don't say that. It is pleasant to meet literature on the road from Ballyglass to Ballinafad.

The road looped round the shoulder of a hill, and beyond a long straight bridge or viaduct we spied the gate of Ballinafad.

But, said the Colonel, I am afraid that this gate is always kept locked. You'll miss your train.

If I were to miss a thousand trains, I will see Llewellyn's monastery.

You'll certainly miss your train. It is two miles round—two Irish miles.

He pulled up before a rusty gate, and bounding out of

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the trap, I shook it. It was locked, but there was a stile beside it.

We can send the trap round to the other gate, which is nearer by two miles to the station, and walk up to the house.

Yes, we can do that, he said.

Then let us do it, for I must see Llewellyn's mission-house or monastery.

Before Moore Hall, Ballinafad was, the Colonel answered, and he told me how the Blakes had kept their property through the Penal Laws by a special charter granted to them by Charles II. The charter he assured me was still preserved, and I asked if all this comely woodland were going to be given over to the monks. Groves in which, I said, it would be easy to imagine a rout of nymphs and satyrs. Or Thyrsis praying the goat-herd to seat himself in the shelter of that great oak, and pipe to him. Delightful woods. And whilst talking of Amaryllis, Silenus and the Zephyrs, some twenty or thirty youths passed across the glade, and having need to overtake them for inquiry we called to their shepherd, who stopped his flock. He told us that we should find Father —— 'within,' and on the house coming into view I said: I always hated that strange porch, so out of keeping is it with the landscape.

The Colonel answered that the house was built by our grandfather, Maurice Blake, a soldier who had served in the Peninsula, and that the porch was probably an imperfect memory of one he had seen in Italy on his way home. No attempt, I said, has been yet made to give the house an ecclesiastical air.

The ecclesiastical changes will come later on, the Colonel replied, and he expounded once more the complex question of Llewellyn's rights under his father's will, and

he continued to expound it whilst I looked round the drawing-room in which my mother and her sisters had certainly played a selection from *Norma*, and in which Joe had strummed his memories of *Traviata* and *Il Trovatore* for Biddy's and for his own amusement. The remembered pictures were still on the walls—setters creeping up to birds, probably grouse; and I began to peer into the painting like a Bond Street dealer, for the approach of a priest always sets me mumming. The door opened, and a young man of sleek speech and calves begged us to be seated; and choosing the most comfortable chair for himself, and tossing himself till he discovered its easiest corner, he told us that a large number of the last batch of missionaries sent out to West Africa had died, the climate being unhealthy, but another batch was going out shortly, and he hoped not to lose so many.

And did those that died pray for the soul of Count Llewellyn Blake?

He hoped that they had done so, for Count Llewellyn Blake had done a great deal for them, and I put it to him that Llewellyn's soul was a heavy tax upon the population of Mayo, something like seventeen out of thirty-six having died. We asked him some questions regarding the possibility of converting the savages to a more rational spirituality than that which they practised in the forest.

We meet with a great many difficulties; first and foremost the unwillingness of men to relinquish their wives.

I asked if any provision was being made for the abandoned wives?

The young man admitted that they had not thought out that side of the question.

The children, I answered, offer you a fairer field.

Yes, we try to get hold of the children, he answered; and after some conversation with me about the climate of Africa

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being answerable for much of the faith of the savages in their superstitions, the young priest turned to the Colonel, and ventured to express a hope that he would come over again from Moore Hall to see them, bringing his two little boys with him. Father Zimmermann, who is at present in Switzerland, he said, will be back in Ballinafad at the end of the month.

The whole scheme is intimately associated with Father Zimmerman, the Colonel said on our way to the stables. A very different man from the one we have seen.

But how can he be different and continue the traffic he is engaged in? I cannot disassociate a man from his work as you do. A man is his work.

In the stables we were met by some of Joe Blake's hirelings, stablemen of old time who had seen the cracks go up to the Curragh, and they lamented the change; a foreign priest, they said, come to take Irishmen away to Africa, one whom Count Llewellyn had met at Ballinafad some two or three years ago, and when he ordered Jimmy Glynn to ready the dining-room for Mass, they began to have a notion of what was going to happen. The tenants, too, had got wind of the change, and were waiting at the hall door, asking how much of the land the Count was going to make over to the Swiss boyo, who was up to the height of his ankles in carpets before he took up with religion. Literature again, I whispered, and listened with glee to the tale of how the Swiss boyo and the Count had escaped through the garden, but were caught up at Lakemount, brought to bay, and how getting round them the peasants had sworn that every one of them would turn Protestant if any bloody monks were put into Ballinafad. The rain that came towards us aslant over the bog was in our faces, and with large drops running down my nose I continued: The monks and Llewellyn's anxiety about his

soul may well bring about a revival of Christianity. You heard them say they would turn Protestant.

I think the word Protestant was a sop for you, the Colonel answered.

The rain splashed in our faces, making conversation difficult, and when it ceased I heard the Colonel's voice saying from under his mackintosh: I should like to outwit Llewellyn.

It is very difficult for me to understand you, for you are not moved by any mean sense of future pecuniary loss to yourself; your fingers do not itch to clutch. Family feeling is strong in you, stronger than in me. No one could be more shocked than you when I told you that I had heard the ecclesiastics had gotten Howth Castle, and the disappearance of Ballinafad affects you in the same way. Yet you contrive to reconcile admiration of the cause with detestation of the result. For, of course, as long as priests can persuade people that Masses for the dead will get their souls out of Purgatory they will continue to despoil their relations.

The rain is coming on again, the Colonel interjected, and if the train isn't late we shall miss it. At every hill I asked how far we were from the station. The train was late, and walking up the platform I grew so bitter about Catholicism that he at last said: A religion, at all events, that has made more converts than any other.

The witless and hysterical—ladies who have been through the Divorce Courts and young men with filthy careers behind them.

The train steamed in, and the porter cried, First class behind! Would you like to have your hat-box in the carriage with you? Yes, I answered mechanically, and jumped into the train, glad to escape from a wrangle that had become unendurable. The Colonel had said the night

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before last that we had better not see each other, and though the words seemed hard I could not resist their truth, for it was indeed a relief to get away from him. Catholics and Protestants don't mix; we are never comfortable in the society of Catholics. The guard blew his whistle, the train moved up the platform, the Colonel passed out of sight, and I said: So this is the end. He thinks that I have changed. We have both changed, and the fault is neither with him nor with me. He was born a Papist, and this is the end; unendurable words if we have given all our love. And thinking how much I had lost, I sat looking out on the wet fields of Mayo. So this is the end! I cried, scaring a fellow-passenger, who looked at me askance over his newspaper. He returned to his paper, I to my thoughts, which were no longer with the Colonel but with myself. In which direction does my life lie? I asked. My mission in Ireland is over, and there is little casual visiting in Paris. I shall write less and read more, and the large book containing the thirty-six plays will never be out of my hand.

At the prospect of becoming another Sir Sidney Lee, Paris began to recede, and I remembered that Steer and Tonks and Sickert lived in London. But even if I live in London I shall have to spend my evenings alone, unless I join a club. Bayreuth falls only every second year, and the concerts at the Queen's Hall are often common enough. Saint-Saëns and Dvořák are often played, and a private orchestra is beyond my means. But with a piano. . . . A piano demands a wife, and with one who could play Schumann, Schubert, Wagner, Chopin, and Liszt, the evenings would go by happily, an excellent cigar in my mouth, my stern in a comfortable armchair. Had I married Doris I should have an hour and a half of music every evening, and if the rule were maintained for several years, we should

get through the vast pile of chamber-music. I have a taste for Scarlatti; and if this admirable woman who can play all Bach were to bear me a child, he would inherit his mother's musical ear, and it is not likely that my son would lack inventive faculty and sense of composition. And while watching the musical instinct developing in him, my heart will be filling with joy, and I shall look forward to hearing all the ridiculous and uncouth strains that have tempted and deceived me reduced to shape, but not in symphonies—my son will write operas, the words as well as the music, for I should like him to inherit as much of my literary gifts as will enable him to construct the poem on which to weave the woof, but not more.

My thoughts were away in a jiffy in France, for the German musical idiom is worn to rags; but there is a musical atmosphere in France, and I remembered a great stone bridge with fishermen sitting on the quays, their legs hanging over the side. I had watched their floats being carried down by the current last year, had seen them lift their floats out of the current and drop them in again, and had waited, pretending to myself that I would like to see a fish rise, but really interested in the adventure that I knew to be at my heels. An empty fly came by, and the driver asked if he might take me to Chinon. It seemed as if I heard the name, and feeling Chinon to be my adventure, I jumped into the carriage, and was driven along a road of which I remember nothing except a steep hill and at the top of it a feudal castle in ruins. Our poor little horse could hardly drag us up the hill, and the coachman turned in his seat and began to relate some history; but at that moment my eyes were taken up by a poster representing a house, or castle—I was not sure which—an extravagance painting it was. *Post Impressionism*, I said, at Chinon; and dismissing the driver, I applied to an old man sitting

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by the side of the gate, his shaggy dog beside him, for information.

C'est le portrait de la maison.

Laquelle? Pardon, monsieur, mais je ne vois pas une maison ici qui aît pu vous servir de modèle.

La maison n'est pas encore construite. Je l'ai seulement dessinée pour inspirer l'acheteur de la propriété que voici. Le clos St. Georges.

Une vraie petite aventure, I said to myself, and followed the old man round the enclosure, amused by the pomp with which he vaunted the excellence of his grapes and the courtesy with which he invited my admiration of the pears and peaches ripening on the southern wall. I had seen fine peaches and pears at home, but never flowers like silk gathered into a rosette. And seeing that I was genuinely ignorant, he told me the tree in question was a *grenadier*, and trying to remember what a *grenadier* was in English, I stood admiring the roofs of Chinon under the hill.

C'est là où naquit notre grand Rabelais.

Finir mes jours en face de la ville de Rabelais; quelle joie pour un Irlandais!

Mais, monsieur, vous êtes encore jeune; cinquante et quelques années; and he looked at me interrogatively and regretfully, for the old man was seventy *et quelques années*.

Ici, je voudrais vivre et mourir, I answered mechanically.

Rien ne vous empêche, monsieur, d'acheter ma vigne . . . et pas cher. Voyez-vous il y a des avantages; and he led me down into a pit which he had digged in the centre of the enclosure, and pointed out to me a great many stones and broken arches.

Il y a de quoi bâtir une jolie maison; and I learnt from him that these stones had once formed part of the castle, that it was here that Henry of Anjou (Henry II. of England) had died on the altar steps, and that the house

I had in mind, with the old carvings he had stacked by the hut in which he and his dog lived let into the walls, would not cost me more than a thousand pounds to build. He asked me if I would like to see his pictures, for when he was not spraying his vines he was painting scenes from the life of Joan of Arc in distemper, and spraying vines had become hard work; he was seventy-five, and wished to finish his paintings before he died.

Achetez donc ma vigne, monsieur; finissez vos jours en face de la ville où naquit notre grand Rabelais.

Why not?

And now with the advent of my new idea—that a musician was the legitimate end of my life—the Clos St. Georges began to acquire a new and potent significance. She and the boy and the vineyard will be the pear and the peach, the apricot, the nectarine, the bottle of wine from my own vineyard. My life will have to end somewhere. Why not in the Clos St. Georges? Because *Hail and Farewell* must be written, a voice answered from within. Before the vineyard could be purchased and the house built *Hail and Farewell* must be finished. *Ave* was in the publisher's hands; a good deal of *Salve* was written; there was a sketch, chapter for chapter, down to the very end. And between Mullingar and Dublin I realised, more acutely than I had ever done before, that *Hail and Farewell* could not be abandoned for a vineyard. I have been led to write it, by whom I know not, but I have been led by the hand like a little child. And it was borne in upon me at the same time that a sacrifice was demanded of me, by whom I knew not, nor for what purpose, but I felt I must leave my native land and my friends for the sake of the book; a work of liberation I divined it to be—liberation from ritual and priests, a book of precept and example, a turning point in Ireland's destiny, and yet I prayed that I might be spared the pain of

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the writing it and permitted instead to acquire the Clos St. Georges, a wife, and a son. But no man escapes his fate. Something was propelling me out of Ireland, whither I was not yet sure. I must yield to instinct, I said to Æ. He was deeply moved.

You are going away from us to spend your evenings with Steer and Tonks, but where shall I spend mine?

It may grieve you to lose me, dear Æ, and it grieves me to lose you. . . . I shall never find anybody like you again. Æ is only found once in a lifetime.

You'll not forget me? he said, grasping my hand.

The next night we met at Bailey's, the Land Commissioner, who lives in Earlsfort Terrace. I had gained his friendship in the last year of my sojourn in Ireland, and found his alert and witty mind so pleasant that I had begun to think it a pity I had let him go by unknown for so many years. Bailey knows a good picture and buys one occasionally, he reads books and has practised literature, and will probably practise it again; some day he will write his memoirs. And, better still, he practises life, going away every year for long travel, to return to Ireland, his mind enriched. He has not influenced me in my life as Æ, or John Eglinton, or Yeats, and to speak of him here is a little outside of my subject, but if I closed this book without mention of him it would seem that I had forgotten the many hours we passed together. Besides, his dinner party is fixed in my mind. He assembled all my friends: Æ, Ernest, Longworth, Philip Hanson, John Healy, John Eglinton, the graceful and witty Dena Tyrrell, and Susan Mitchell, who sang songs about the friends I was leaving behind me.

On a grey windless morning in February the train took me to Kingston, and I had always looked forward to leaving Ireland in May, seeking the words of a last farewell or

VALE

murmuring the words of Catullus when he journeyed over land and sea to burn the body of his brother, fitting them to my circumstance by the change of a single word:

ATQUA IN PERPETUUM, MATER, AVE ATQUA VALE,
but our dreams and our circumstances are often in conflict, and never were they in greater opposition than the day the train took me from Westland Row past a long, barren tract of sand: a grey sky hanging low over the sea far away in the offing without a ripple upon it. If the evening had been a golden evening my heart might have overflowed with fine sentiments; for it is on golden evenings that fine sentiments overflow the heart! the heart is then like crystal that the least touch will break; but on a cold, bleak, February morning the prophet is as uninspired as his humblest fellow, and a very humble fellow, forgetful of Ireland, forgetful of Catholicism, forgetful of literature, went below to think of the friends he had left behind him—Æ and the rest.

(1)

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